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ABSTRACT

In six sections, this child care notebook provides basic information concerning (1) child care in general; (2) day care centers; (3) family day care; (4) employers, parents, and child care; (5) school-age child care; and (6) group care for infants and toddlers. Section I focuses on types of child care programs, sources of information about child care and child development, and early childhood periodicals. Section II concerns things to do in starting a center, licensing, choice of a facility, provision of equipment for a center, center staffing. The operating budget is also covered. Section III suggests things to consider in starting a family day care home, and discusses licensing and taxes, records and insurance, arrangement of the home environment, and the process of planning an educational program. Section IV explores aspects of parent and employer involvement in child care, assessment of child care needs, options for employers, and advantages and disadvantages of these options. Section V discusses organization of a school-age child care program, choice of setting, acquisiton of appropriate equipment, the staffing of the program, and the planning of the daily program. Self-care programs for school-age children are also discussed. Section VI provides guidelines for implementing a program of group care for infants and toddlers, and discusses choice of a facility and equipment, staffing, development of a daily program, health and safety, and parent-staff relationships. (RH)

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TABLE OF CONTENTS
PCS REV. 3/84

child care notebook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I: CHILD CARE (General Information)

I:1 What Are the Types of Child Care Programs?
I:2 Sources for Information About Child Care and Child Development
I:3 Early Childhood Periodicals

Section II: DAY CARE CENTER

II:1 So . . . You Want To Start a Day Care Center . . .
II:1a Checklist of Major Tasks
II:2 Day Care Center Licensing
II:3 Choosing a Day Care Center Facility
II:4 Equipping the Day Care Center
II:5 The Day Care Center Staff
II:6 The Day Care Center Budget

Section III: FAMILY DAY CARE

III:1 So . . . You Want to Take Care of Children in Your Home . . .
III:2 Family Day Care Licensing and Taxes
III:3 Family Day Care Records and Insurance
III:4 Arranging the Family Day Care Home Environment
III:5 Planning the Day in Family Day Care

Section IV: EMPLOYERS, PARENTS, AND CHILD CARE

IV:1 Employers, Parents, and Child Care: Some Basic Considerations
IV:2 Assessing Child Care Needs
IV:3 Options for Employers
IV:4 Choosing the Right Option

Section V: SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

V:1 Organizing a School-Age Child Care Program
V:2 Choosing a Setting for School-Age Child Care
V:3 Equipment for School-Age Child Care Programs
V:4 Staffing the School-Age Child Care Program
V:5 Planning the Daily Program for School-Age Children
V:6 Self-Care Programs for School-Age Children

Section VI: Group Care for Infants and Toddlers

VI:1 Group Care for Infants and Toddlers: Off to a Good Start
VI:2 Choosing a Facility and Equipment for an Infant/Toddler Program
VI:3 Staffing an Infant/Toddler Program
VI:4 The Daily Program for Infants and Toddlers
VI:5 Protecting the Health and Safety of Infants and Toddlers
VI:6 Relationships between Parents and the Infant/Toddler Program Staff

Form for Reactions/Comments/Suggestions

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CHILD CARE 1:1
TYPES OF PROGRAMS
PCS Rev. 6/83

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WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF CHILD CARE PROGRAMS?

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Communities vary in the types and quality of the child care options available for families. The following descriptions include a number of programs that may or may not exist in a given community:

DAY CARE CENTER - provides group care for children away from their own homes for all or part of a day. Most centers enroll three- to five-year-olds; some accept children from infancy through school-age. Fees vary, depending on funding, some centers have a sliding-fee-scale or offer "scholarships."

Day care centers that enroll more than three children for more than three hours per day must be licensed by the New York State Department of Social Services, and must comply with specific requirements for facility, health, safety, staffing, and educational program.

DROP-IN CARE - provides supervised play on an irregular or "as-needed" basis, usually for less than three hours per day; pre-registration is often encouraged. Staff may be volunteers and/or parents. An hourly rate is usually charged for care.

EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED CHILD CARE - day care provided by or subsidized by an employer for employees. Care may be in a day care center at or near the worksite, might be "purchased" by the employer in one or more community centers or family day care homes, or might take the form of donations or family-oriented personnel practices.

FAMILY DAY CARE - provided in the caregiver's home for all or part of a day. No more than six children can be accepted; ages range from infancy through school age. Fees are determined by the caregiver.
New York State Department of Social Services license or county certification is required for most homes. A high quality home will provide some of the services offered by a day care center.

HEAD START - federally-funded program for three- to five-year-olds from low-income families. Offers a comprehensive child development program, including health, nutrition, education, and social services. Parent involvement is an integral part of the program. There are various program options - part-day, double sessions, full-day or home-based. There is no fee.

IN-HOME CARE - provided in the child's own home. If the care is on a regular basis, the caregiver is considered an employee, and is entitled to minimum wage and certain other benefits.

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MIGRANT CHILD CARE- provides full-day care for children of migrant parents employed in agriculture in New York State. Most centers are open only during peak agricultural seasons. Developmental program includes education, health, and nutrition. Program is administered by NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets; there is no fee.

NURSERY SCHOOL - provides social and educational program for preschoolers. Some programs emphasize a particular philosophy (Montessori, Waldorf, etc.). Nursery schools operate for less than three hours per session, two to five times per week, and often follow a school-year schedule. Fees vary, depending on schedule and funding.

Nursery schools may voluntarily register with the New York State Education Department, which sets standards for facility, staff, and program.

NURSERY SCHOOL COOPERATIVE - requires parent participation to administer the school and to assist a professional teacher in the classroom. Fees vary, depending on sources of funding and amount of parent participation.

NYS EXPERIMENTAL PRE-K - State-funded public school program for three- and four-year-olds from low socio-economic areas. Provides comprehensive health and social services, parent involvement and developmental program. There is no fee.

PARENT BABYSITTING COOPERATIVE - care of children is shared by a group of families without exchanging money. Most co-ops assign "points" for services based on number of children, hours, etc. Members follow agreed-upon guidelines and share record-keeping responsibilities.

PLAYGROUP - parents take turns providing activities for each other's children in their homes. Most playgroups meet for two to three hours once or twice a week. They are designed to meet the social needs of children and provide some free time for parents. Costs are shared.

PRESCHOOL - a general term which includes any program that offers an educational component for the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development of young children.

SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE - provides supervision and planned recreational activities for school-age children in the hours before and/or after school, or at times when school is not in session. School-age child care may be offered by day care centers, family day care homes, public schools, or other community agencies and organizations. Fees vary depending on ages of children, hours, and services provided.

SPECIAL CHILDREN'S CENTERS - provide services for handicapped preschool children. Name of programs differ in various communities. For information, contact New York State Education Department's Regional Early Childhood Direction Centers.

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SOURCES FOR INFORMATION ABOUT CHILD CARE AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The following organizations and agencies offer information, written materials and/or technical assistance on a variety of child care and child development topics. There is usually a charge for publications.

Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI)
3815 Wisconsin Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20016
(202) 363-6936
(publications; membership; journal)

Child Care, Inc.
125 W. 109th Street
New York, NY 10025
(212) 864-3310
(advocacy; technical assistance; subscription; newsletter)

Child Care Law Center
625 Market Street, Suite 815
San Francisco, CA 94105
(415) 495-5498
(publications on legal issues, insurance, tax incentives)

Child Development Associate National Credentialing Office
1341 G Street, N.W.
Suite 802
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 638-6656
(CDA competency standards; assessments and credentialing)

Child Welfare League of America
67 Irving Place
New York, NY 10003
(202) 254-7410
(publications, advocacy)

Children's Defense Fund
122 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
Toll Free 1-800-424-9602
(publications; subscription newsletter; advocacy; CHILD WATCH)

Children's Foundation
1420 New York Avenue, N.W.
Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 347-3300
(newsletter; information on food programs)

Council on Interracial Books for Children
1841 Broadway
New York, NY 10023
(212) 757-5339
(bibliographies; newsletter)

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Cooperative Extension County Offices
- consult local phone book for address and phone number -
(publications; newsletters; public meetings; technical assistance)

Cooperative Extension
Distribution Center
7 Research Park
Cornell University
(607) 256-2080 or 256-2090 (AV)
(publications; audio-visuals)

ERIC/ECE
College of Education
University of Illinois
Urbana, IL 61801
(217) 333-1386
(ERIC publications & microfiche; newsletter; subscription)

Licensed Family Day Care Association of NYS
Pearl Fields, President
195-27 Carpenter Avenue
Hollis, New York 11423

National Association for Child Care Management
1800 M Street, N.W., Suite 1030N
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 452-8100
(membership; newsletter; advocacy)

National Association for Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
Toll Free 1-800-434-2460
(publications; membership; journal)

National Association for Family Day Care
41 Dunbar Street
Manchester, New Hampshire 03103
(membership, newsletter)

National Black Child Development Institute
1463 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 387-1281
(publications; advocacy)

National Center for Clinical Infant Programs
733 15th St., N.W., Suite 912
Washington, D.C. 20005
(202) 347-0308
(publications; newsletters)

NYS Child Care Coordinating Council
54 Washington Street
Hempstead, NY 11550
(516) 538-1362
(information on day care councils; advocacy)

NYS Department of Social Services
40 N. Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12203
Toll Free 1-800-342-3715
(day care regulations; technical assistance)

NYS Education Department
Bureau of Child Development and Parent Education
Albany, NY 12201
(518) 474-4947
(information on Pre-K public school programs; technical assistance)

NYS Education Department
Bureau of Elementary School Supervison
(Lydia Richards)
(518) 474-5894
(voluntary N.S. Registration)

School-Age Child Care Project
Wellesley College
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley, MA 02181
(617) 431-1453
(publications; technical assistance; newsletter)

Statewide Youth Advocacy Project
426 Powers Building
Rochester, NY 14614
(716) 454-5419
(technical assistance; networking; advocacy; newsletter; information on CHILD WATCH in NYS)

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Legislative Affairs/Public Information
Food and Nutrition Service
Washington, D.C. 20250
(202) 756-3351
(child care food program; publications)

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EARLY CHILDHOOD PERIODICALS

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The following periodicals present current information on a variety of child care development topics, including educational programming; research; book reviews; legislation; funding; and program administration:

Child Care Information Exchange
C-44
Redmond, Washington 98050
(bi-monthly; $20/year)

Day Care and Early Education
Human Sciences Press
72 Fifth Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10011
(quarterly; $18/year)

New York Early Education Reporter
117 Euclid Avenue
Albany, N.Y. 12203
(3 times/year; included in membership dues of local chapters of NYSAEYC)

SACC Newsletter
School-Age Child Care Project
Wellesley College
Center for Research on Women
Wellesley, MA 02181
(3 times/year. Free)

School Age Notes
P.O. Box 120674
Nashville, TE 37212
(6 times/year; $12/year)

Young Children
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20009
(bi-monthly; included in membership dues of NAEYC OR $15/year to non-members)

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SO . . . YOU WANT TO START A DAY CARE CENTER . . .

by Sue West, Director
Cornell University Nursery School

and

Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Creating a day care center to meet the needs in your community may look overwhelming at first, but it is possible. The following checklist is offered as a guide to getting started.

Assess the needs in the community.

- How many children are already in day care? Where are the programs located? What schedule options do they offer? Do the existing programs have waiting lists?
- What age groups of children appear to need care the most? What kinds of new programs seem to be needed?
- What are the census figures for the community? What are the employment patterns? income distribution?
- Ask the local Child Care Council, AEYC Chapter, Cooperative Extension Agent, other child care providers, public school teachers, principals, and nurses; consult your local planning office; place posters in grocery stores, laundromats, and pediatrician's offices; call a meeting of interested parents; conduct a door-to-door or telephone survey to sample options, put ads in the local paper; contact community action groups.

Be clear about your own objectives.

- Do you enjoy working with children and want to invest your energies and talents in that direction?
- How much time and energy can you devote to this project?
- Do you want to start your own center or promote community action?
- Do you (and/or your associates) have the necessary background and training for providing quality child care? What is your educational philosophy?
- Are you financially prepared to handle a sizeable investment and monthly operating expenses until the center is well established?

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Make some basic decisions about the type of program and the number and ages of children to be served.

- What type of program will meet the needs you've identified: full-day care for infants and/or preschoolers, after-school care for older children, part-day care, care for children with special needs?
- How many children will the center enroll? What will the enrollment policies be?
- How many hours and days will the center need to be open to meet the needs of parents?
- How many staff will be needed? What types of jobs will they do?
- What kinds of activities will the program include? What equipment and materials might be needed?
- Will the center be a not-for-profit organization or proprietary (for profit)?
- Will you provide transportation or will it be the responsibility of parents?
- Will you prepare meals and snacks in the center or will they be contracted?
- What will your policy be on children's health? What will you do about children who are ill, or who need prescription medicines?
- What will be the parent's rights and responsibilities?
- Who will serve on the center's board of directors and/or advisory committees? What will their responsibilities be?

Once these questions are answered, you're ready to move ahead with your plans. This Child Care Notebook is designed to provide additional information about many facets of child care programming. For additional pages and/or copies, consult your County Cooperative Extension Home Economics Agent.

References and Suggested Readings:

Boguslawski, Dorothy. Guide for Establishing and Operating a Day Care Center for Young Children. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966.

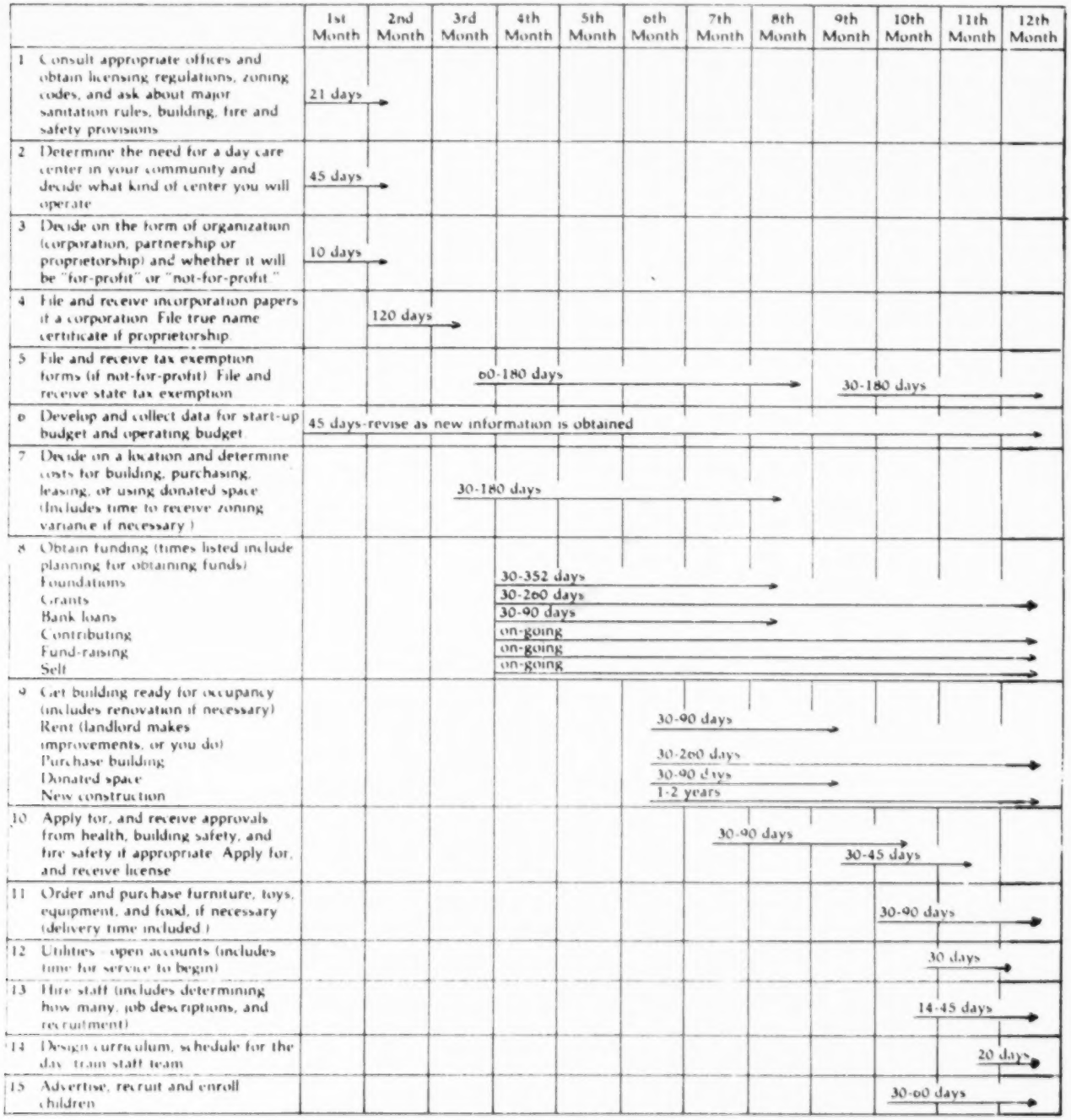
Evans, E. Belle, Beth Shub and Marlene Weinstein. Day Care: How to Plan, Develop and Operate a Day Care Center. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

New York State Department of Social Services. Information for Groups and Individuals Interested in Organizing a Day Care Center. Albany, NY

Yocum, Jan C., Project Director. How to Start a Day Care Center. Washington, D.C.:Day Care Council of America, 1981.

Zamoff, Richard B. Guide to the Assessment of Day Care Services and Needs at the Community Level. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1971.

Checklist of Major Tasks*


1st Month
2nd Month
3rd Month
4th Month
5th Month
6th Month
7th Month
8th Month
9th Month
10th Month
11th Month
12th Month
1 Consult appropriate offices and obtain licensing regulations, zoning codes, and ask about major sanitation rules, building, fire and safety provisions
21 days
2 Determine the need for a day care center in your community and decide what kind of center you will operate
45 days
3 Decide on the form of organization (corporation, partnership or proprietorship) and whether it will be "for-profit" or "not-for-profit"
10 days
4 File and receive incorporation papers if a corporation. File true name certificate if proprietorship.
120 days
5 File and receive tax exemption forms (if not-for-profit). File and receive state tax exemption
60-180 days
30-180 days
6 Develop and collect data for start-up budget and operating budget
45 days-revise as new information is obtained
7 Decide on a location and determine costs for building, purchasing, leasing, or using donated space (includes time to receive zoning variance if necessary)
30-180 days
8 Obtain funding (times listed include planning for obtaining funds)
Foundations
Grants
Bank loans
Contributing
Fund-raising
Self
30-352 days
30-260 days
30-90 days
on-going
on-going
on-going
9 Get building ready for occupancy (includes renovation if necessary)
Rent (landlord makes improvements, or you do)
Purchase building
Donated space
New construction
30-90 days
30-260 days
30-90 days
1-2 years
10 Apply for, and receive approvals from health, building safety, and fire safety if appropriate. Apply for, and receive license
30-90 days
30-45 days
11 Order and purchase furniture, toys, equipment, and food, if necessary (delivery time included)
30-90 days
12 Utilities - open accounts (includes time for service to begin)
30 days
13 Hire staff (includes determining how many, job descriptions, and recruitment)
14-45 days
14 Design curriculum, schedule for the day, train staff team
20 days
15 Advertise, recruit and enroll children
30-60 days

If you are building a new building, and need a lot of time to raise money and plan, it could take more than a year to get started. The above assumes that you will take about a year. By concentrated planning, and using the shortest length of time possible for each step, it could be done in half this projected time.

Source: How To Start a Day Care Center. The Day Care Council of America, 1981.

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DAY CARE CENTER LICENSING

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

New York State Law requires that any child care center that provides care for three or more children away from their own homes for more than three hours per day must obtain a permit (license) from the New York State Department of Social Services. (There are some exceptions, such as day camps and public school programs.)

The licensing regulations are designed to protect children. They set requirements for space, safety, staffing, health, nutrition, education, parent involvement, record-keeping, and transportation.

Athough a license does not guarantee quality, it does provide safeguards. In order to obtain a license, a day care center must show that it is financially sound, has a suitable facility, and employs qualified staff in specific ratios to the numbers and ages of children enrolled. The center must obtain inspections and approvals from a number of other regulatory agencies, and is required to submit additional documentation regarding business arrangements, program, procedures, and services offered.

A license to operate a day care center is valid for up to two years and can be renewed. There is no charge for the permit.

The licensing process can take several months; it should be started as soon as one or more possible sites are located for the center and before any money is invested.

STEPS IN THE LICENSING PROCESS:

1. Contact the nearest regional Day Care Licensing Unit. Licensing Representatives at these offices can provide assistance throughout the licensing process. Ask for a copy of the regulations and an application form.

   Locations of regional licensing units, NYS Department of Social Services:

   Eastern
   40 N. Pearl Street Annex
   Albany, NY 12243
   (518) 473-1003

   Western
   570 Delaware Ave.
   2nd Floor
   Buffalo, NY 14202
   (716) 883-4093

   Central Western
   36 West Main Street
   Rochester, NY 14614
   (716) 454-4272

   Metropolitan
   2 World Trade Center
   Room 2915
   New York, NY 10047
   (212) 488-6462

   Each licensing unit serves several counties. For more information, call toll free 1-800-342-3715.

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STEPS IN THE LICENSING PROCESS (cont.)

2. Read the regulations; list any questions. Call or meet with a Licensing Representative to go over the regulations and procedures for obtaining a license.

3. Contact inspectors for Building, Fire, Health, Zoning, Transportation, and any other Departments that apply. Become familiar with their requirements. If local inspectors are unfamiliar with day care regulations, enlist the assistance of the State Licensing Representative.

4. Before investing any money, arrange for the Licensing Representative and other inspectors to visit the proposed site for the day care center. With their help, determine whether the facility meets all requirements or can be remodelled/renovated to meet all requirements.

5. Consult a lawyer about incorporation or other business arrangements, tax status, legal responsibilities and liabilities. Arrange for necessary certificates.

6. Arrange for general liability insurance (required) and any other insurances that may be necessary.

7. Compile all additional documentation. Some examples: projected budget; diagram of the building; personnel policies, job descriptions and/or resumes, salaries; plan for educational activities; health plan signed by a physician; menus signed by a nutritionist; emergency plans; special provisions for children under three or school-age children; samples of all forms.

8. Submit completed application to the Department of Social Services. The application must include all required inspection reports and documentation.

References and Suggested Readings:

Boguslawski, Dorothy. Guide for Establishing and Operating a Day Care Center for Young Children. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966.

Evans, E. Belle, Beth Shub and Marlene Weinstein. Day Care: How to Plan, Develop and Operate a Day Care Center. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1980.

New York State Department of Social Services. Information for Groups and Individuals Interested in Organizing a Day Care Center. Albany, NY

Yocum, Jan Calderon, Project Director. How to Start a Day Care Center. Washington,D.C.: Day Care Council of America, 1981.

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DAY CARE CENTER II:3
CHOOSING A FACILITY
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CHOOSING A DAY CARE CENTER FACILITY

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The choice of a facility for a day care center is a major decision and a long-lasting one. Program, staff, and equipment can be changed as needed, but it is extremely difficult to relocate a center or to add space.

When choosing a facility, consider licensing requirements, program priorities, costs, and long-range plans. The following checklist can serve as a guide.

LOCATION

- Is the location convenient for the families the center will serve?
- Is the area safe? Is there fire and police protection?
- Is the area zoned for day care? If not, can a variance be obtained?

THE BUILDING

- Does the building meet State licensing requirements? Local building, fire, health, and safety codes? If not, can it be remodelled or renovated? How much will it cost?
- Does the building have enough indoor space for the number of children to be enrolled? (A minimum of 35 square feet per child is required not counting kitchen, bathrooms, offices, hallways. Many authorities recommend 45-50 square feet per child.)
- Is there enough room to expand and/or add additional services?
- Does the indoor space meet the needs of different age groups?
- Can the space for each group be arranged to provide different program activities for the children?
- Is there enough space so that each child can store coats and personal belongings?
- Is there enough space for adult needs -- offices, staff area, parent/visitor area, storage?
- Is the building attractive? Will it need cleaning? Painting? Carpeting? Curtains? Soundproofing? How much will these improvements cost?
- Does the building have adequate bathroom facilities for children and adults? (Plan on a minimum of 1 toilet and 1 washbasin for every 15 children, plus separate bathroom for staff.)

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- Are there adequate kitchen facilities? Does the kitchen meet all health and sanitation requirements? Is there enough storage space?
- Does the building have an acceptable commercial or industrial-type fire alarm or smoke detector system? If not, can one be installed? How much will it cost?
- Are there at least two widely separated exits?
- Is there adequate heat, light, ventilation? Is the sewage system adequate?
- Is there a safe, plentiful supply of hot and cold water?
- If outdoor space is limited, is there room for active, "large muscle" activities inside the building?

OUTDOOR SPACE

- Is there outdoor play space adjoining the building or nearby? (Many authorities recommend 100-200 square feet of outdoor space per child.)
- Can the outdoor play space be arranged to meet the needs of different age groups?
- Is the outdoor play area safe? Can children be protected from potential dangers, such as heavy traffic, creeks, ponds, etc.?
- Are there sunny and shady areas? Both hard and soft surfaces? Good drainage?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Will the facility be shared? If so, will it be necessary to move equipment and supplies regularly? Who will be responsible? What arrangements will be needed for storage? For identifying ownership of equipment and supplies?
- What will it cost to use the facility? (Include utilities, telephone, repairs, maintenance, insurance, rent/lease/mortgage payment.)
- What are the terms of the lease or rental agreement? Are the responsibilities of both landlord and center spelled out? Is there a termination clause? An option to renew?
- If the facility does not meet all priorities, what compromises can be made?

References and Suggested Readings:

Boguslawski, Dorothy. Guide for Establishing and Operating a Day Care Center for Young Children. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966.

Evans, E. Belle, Beth Shub and Marlene Weinstein. Day Care: How to Plan, Develop and Operate a Day Care Center. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1980.

Yocum, Jan Calderon, Project Director. How to Start a Day Care Center. Washington, D.C.: Day Care Council of America, 1981.

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EQUIPPING THE DAY CARE CENTER

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

For most purposes, "equipment" is defined as any item that is expected to last a fairly long time. (This is quite different from "supplies" which are continually being used up and replaced.)

Obviously, a number of items in a day care center qualify as equipment. It's probably simplest to think about them in terms of things that the children use, and things that are used by adults.

Equipment for the children should be chosen to meet their developmental needs and the goals of the program. The children's equipment is usually arranged in these basic activity areas:*

DRAMATIC PLAY/HOUSEKEEPING - child-size play stove, sink, table, chairs; dolls; mirrors; dress-up clothes; kitchen accessories; telephones, etc.

BLOCKS - unit blocks; hollow blocks; wooden animals, people, cars, trucks (in scale to blocks)

READING - books; low shelves or book racks; soft rug; pillows, bean bags, chairs

CREATIVE EXPRESSION - easels; record player; musical instruments

MANIPULATIVES - table, chairs; table games, puzzles, lotto, peg boards; materials for stringing, lacing, matching, etc.

If outdoor play space is limited or the weather is inclement, indoor space and equipment should be provided for active, physical play. Equipment for science, water, sand, woodworking, and other activities might be included if space allows.

Things that children use while they play and learn should encourage participation and creativity. There should be a balance of types of equipment -- some for active play and others for quiet activities; some for group play and others that allow a child to be alone. Items that can be used in many ways are preferable to items that serve a single purpose.

*This information pertains to programs for preschoolers. There are special considerations that apply to infants, toddlers, and school-age children. See "References and Suggested Readings."

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Thought should also be given to equipment that can be arranged to create pleasant traffic patterns and/or to provide efficient storage space convenient to the activity areas.

In addition to items for play and learning, equipment will be needed for eating and sleeping. All items should be safe, durable, and correctly sized for the children

For adults, equipment will be needed for offices, kitchen, staff meeting/rest area, housekeeping and maintenance. If space is available, an area could be equipped for parent use.

Special licensing requirements apply to some equipment, especially for kitchen, bathrooms, heating, and fire safety. Check day care center licensing regulations carefully before investing any money.

Cost is a major factor in choosing equipment for a day care center. In general, it's wise to choose quality over quantity, multi-purpose over single, and to economize on the adult areas rather than those used by the children.

It's possible that some equipment can be made or donated. Day Care Councils, local chapters of the Association for the Education for Young Children, Cooperative Extension Agents, and State Licensing Representatives may have suggestions for sources of inexpensive or "recycled" items and catalogues from equipment suppliers.

References and Suggested Readings:

Boguslawski, Dorothy. Guide for Establishing and Operating a Day Care Center for Young Children. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966.

Deans, Edwina, et al. Selecting Educational Equipment and Materials for School and Home. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1976.

Evans, E. Belle, George Saia, and Elmer A. Evans. Designing a Day Care Center: How to Select, Design and Develop a Day Care Center. Boston: Beacon Press, 1974.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1980.

Suggested Readings about Infants, Toddlers, and School-Age Children:

Birckmayer, Jennifer. A Day in Day Care: A Program for Two-Year-Olds. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1981.

Spedding, Polly. "School-Age Child Care," Section V of the Child Care Notebook. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1983.

Willis, Anne and Henry Ricciuti. A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1975.

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THE DAY CARE CENTER STAFF

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The quality of the day care center staff and the way its members relate to the children, parents, and each other are key factors in the success of the program. Let's look at the composition of a typical day care center staff.

Caregiving/Teaching staff members spend their day interacting with the children, guiding program activities, observing, and recording information that will help meet individual needs. In most centers, they exchange information with the children's parents. They also perform many routine tasks, depending on the age of the children -- diapering, feeding, checking supplies, straightening the room, etc.

Titles vary. "Caregiver" is a term used by many centers to refer to all staff who work directly with the children. Other centers use the terms "Teacher" for professional staff (with college degrees) and "Assistant" or "Aide" for paraprofessionals.

Whatever their title, adults who spend most of their day with children should be warm, sympathetic, dependable, and healthy. They should not only like children, but should be enthusiastic about working with them. They should know (or be in training to learn) basic principles of child development.*

The number of caregivers in a day care center depends upon the number of children enrolled in the center, the size of the groups, and the number of hours the center is open. New York State Licensing regulations require the following minimum staff/child ratios and maximum group sizes:

AGE OF CHILD	MINIMUM REQUIRED STAFF PER NUMBER OF CHILDREN	MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE
8 weeks to 1½ years	1:4	8
	1:4	12
	or	
1½ years to 3 years	1:5	10
	1:6	18
	or	
3 years	1:7	14
	1:7	21
	or	
4 years	1:8	16
	1:8	24
	or	
5 years	1:9	18
6 years to 10 years	1:10	20
10 years to 14 years	1:15	30

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Support Staff members provide the services that enrich the program and keep it running smoothly. Cook, secretary, bookkeeper, maintenance staff, nurse, social worker, bus driver -- all must have certain skills. Since they also interact with the children, it's important that they know and understand them.*

The size of the support staff depends on the size of the center and the services offered. Some support positions are part-time, or can be filled by consultants or volunteers.

Volunteers can provide extra hands and special skills. Artists, musicians, and storytellers can be found among parents, students, senior citizens, and others. Some volunteers provide professional services (legal, medical) or serve on the center's board of directors or Advisory Committees.

Using volunteers regularly as caregivers/teachers needs careful thought. Continuity for the children and licensing requirements for staff/child ratios are serious considerations. Volunteer caregivers should be treated as "unpaid staff." They should be expected to perform tasks for which they are qualified, and should be willing to commit themselves to specific schedules of times when they will work.

Administrative staff can be one person (the Director, who has full responsibility for managing the center and who is also qualified to plan the educational program for the children), or it might be a two-person team (a Director who handles administration, and an Educational Coordinator/Supervisor, in charge of educational programming). The choice will depend largely on the size of the center, its budget, and the qualifications of the Director.*

The administrator of the center is the key to everything that happens in the center, and is also the liaison to the community. Management and public relations skills as well as a sound background in early childhood programming are essential.

The importance of a well-qualified, trained staff cannot be understated. Even though staff salaries and benefits account for 70-80% of the day care center budget, most authorities recommend that if it is necessary to economize, it should be done in other ways.

*NOTE: It is important to check New York State Licensing Regulations for qualifications and limitations regarding staff positions.

References and Suggested Readings:

Boguslawski, Dorothy. Guide for Establishing and Operating a Day Care Center for Young Children. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1966.

Child Care Information Exchange. Reprint #7: Staff Selection. C-44 Redmond, Washington, 1981.

Mitchell, Grace. The Day Care Book: A Guide for Working Parents to Help Them Find the Best Possible Day Care for Their Children. New York: Stein & Day, 1979.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1980.

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THE DAY CARE CENTER BUDGET

by Polly Spedding
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A budget is a plan for managing money; it estimates expenses (money that must be spent) and income (money coming in). For non-profit day care centers, the two should be equal. For proprietary centers, income should be larger than expenses, so that there will be a profit. A realistic operating budget should include.

EXPENSES:

PERSONNEL SERVICES
- Staff salaries and fringe benefits
- Substitutes
- Professional fees (auditor, attorney, health services, consultants, etc.)

FOOD (meals and snacks)

FACILITY COSTS
- Rent or mortgage payment (square foot of space X cost/square foot)
- Utilities - heat, lights, water
- Telephone

EQUIPMENT PURCHASE OR RENTAL (items expected to last a fairly long time)
- Educational - toys, blocks, books, easels, musical instruments, etc.
- Office - desks, typewriters, office machines, storage units
- Kitchen - stove, refrigerator, cooking utensils, dishes and tableware
- Housekeeping/Maintenance - cots, cribs, vacuum cleaner, pails, mops, etc.

SUPPLIES (items continually being used up and replaced)
- Educational - paper, crayons, paints, clay, playdough, etc.
- Office - stationery, forms, pens, pencils, postage
- Housekeeping/Maintenance - blankets, diapers, paper goods, cleansers, etc.

TRANSPORTATION (children to and from center, field trips, staff conferences, meetings)
- Vehicle purchase or rental
- Gas and oil
- Repairs and maintenance
- Insurance

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OTHER EXPENSES
Insurance - liability, fire & theft
Staff development - subscriptions, memberships, training workshops, conferences
Purchased services - garbage disposal, laundry, etc.
Advertising, printing, copying
Repairs to facility or equipment
Loan repayments

INCOME
Child Care Fees paid by parents
Child Care Fees paid by agencies and/or employers
Food Program reimbursement, if available
Donations
Fundraising

Although expenses vary widely from one program to another, most day care centers allocate 70-80% of their budget for personnel services; 10-15% for food; 0-10% for facility costs (some use facilities free of charge); and 10-12% for the remaining categories (equipment, supplies, transportation, other). Even though personnel services consume the largest part of the budget, most authorities recommend that if it is necessary to economize, it should be done in other ways.

"Start-up" costs incurred before a center opens usually reflect higher amounts for equipment purchases, building renovations, and down payments or deposits on building and utilities. A "Start-up Budget" should include enough money to operate for at least the first six months. During this time, income is usually lower because the center has not reached full enrollment; nevertheless, payroll and other costs must be met.

A realistic projection of income should take into account the fact that income from fees rarely represents the maximum possible income if all the children were in the center all the time. Enrollment and attendance fluctuate due to family vacations, changes in employment or residence, or children no longer needing day care. Actual income from fees will probably be 10-15% less than maximum possible income.

Once a budget has been established, it's wise to have an accountant set up a bookkeeping system for keeping track of payments and income. An accountant also can advise on fiscal policies -- payroll schedule, withholding, tax reports, fee payments, audits, and such.

References and Suggested Readings:

Child Care Information Exchange. Reprints #3 and #13. Money Management I & II. C-44, Redmond, Washington, 1981.

Evans, E. Belle, Beth Shub and Marlene Weinstein. Day Care: How to Plan, Develop and Operate a Day Care Center. Boston: Beacon Press, 1971.

Jones, Robert E. Dollars and Sense. Albany, NY: Welfare Research Incorporated.

Morgan, Gwen C. Managing the Day Care Dollars: A Financial Handbook. Cambridge, Mass.: Steam Press, 1982.

Yocum, Jan Calderon. How to Start a Day Care Center. Washington, D.C.: Day Care Council of America, 1981.

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SO . . . YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF CHILDREN IN YOUR HOME. . .

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

If you're thinking about taking care of other people's children in your home, you're about to enter a business called family day care. As the name suggests, your whole family will probably be involved. Many questions need to be answered before you begin. The following checklist* is offered as a guide:

Be clear about your objectives.

- Do you enjoy working with children and want to invest your energies and talents in that direction?
- What challenges and satisfactions are you looking for? Will being a family day care provider help you understand your own children better? Will the extra income make you more secure? Do you really want the responsibility of someone else's children?
- Do you know enough about children's growth and development to do a good job?
- Can you be with children long hours and still be able to give each child the attention and affection her or she needs?
- Are you in good health? Do you have the physical strength and stamina that will be needed?
- Can you care for other people's children without depriving your own family?
- Can you understand and respect other families well enough not to become over-involved with their children or make judgments about their family life style?
- How do you really feel about mothers and fathers who leave their children with someone else for all or part of the day?
- Are you flexible enough to handle the surprises that come when young children are around? Can you handle accidents and emergencies calmly and efficiently?
- Are you willing to rearrange your house and your routines to meet the needs of children?
- Are you prepared to stay in business long enough to provide the continuity of care that children need? Can you continue to offer care until the children and their families no longer need it?

* The checklist is adapted from Family Day Care, edited by Seefeldt & Dittman, Chapter I, pages 20-21 (see "References and Suggested Readings").

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Consider your family.

- Do you have a warm family life that will give children the feeling they are welcome and secure?
- Do the members of your family enjoy children? Are they willing to share their home and their belongings? Are they willing to share your attention?
- Does your familiy understand that the family day care business will bring in extra income, but will take a lot of your time and energy? Are they willing to help? Will they accept changes in the house and household routines?
- Will having young children in the house disturb your family? Will your older children be able to find privacy for studying or having friends in? Will older relatives be able to stand the commotion of having children around? Will a family member who works at night be able to sleep through the daytime noise of children's activities?

Make some basic decisions about your family day care business.

- How many hours and days will you provide care to meet the needs of parents?
- Within the limits set by New York State licensing regulations, how many children will you accept? Are you willing to care for children of all ages or will you accept only a certain age group?
- What will the rights and responsibilities of parents be?
- What kinds of activities will you plan for the children? What equipment and materials will you need? What safety factors need to be considered?
- What will you do about children who are ill or have special needs?
- What will you do for a substitute if you are ill or have an emergency?

Once these questions are answered, you're ready to move ahead with your plans. The Child Care Notebook is designed to provide information about many facets of child care. For additional pages and/or copies, consult your county Cooperative Extension Home Economics Agent.

References and Suggested Readings:

New York State Department of Social Services. Family Day Care Homes: Regulations of the New York State Department of Social Services; Guidelines Providing Interpretations of These Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1979.

Seefeldt, Carol and Dittman, Laura, Editors. Family Day Care (Number 9 in the "Day Care" Series) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973.

Squibb, Betsy. Family Day Care: How to Provide It In Your Home. Harvard, MA: The Harvard Common Press, 1980.

West, Karen, Editor. Family Day-to-Day Care. Mound, MN: Quality Child Care, Inc.,1980.

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FAMILY DAY CARE LICENSING AND TAXES

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

A family day care home is actually a small business. As such, it's subject to certain licensing and tax regulations.

LICENSING

Family Day care is defined by New York State law as the day care of not more than six children provided in an individual's home. The law states that any family day care home that provides care for three or more children away from their own home must obtain a permit (license) or certificate.

Private family day care homes (those that recruit and enroll children for themselves) are licensed by regional offices of the New York State Department of Social Services except in New York City, where the New York City Department of Health has licensing authority.

Some family day care homes are certified by local departments of social services or other authorized child caring agencies. These homes accept children who are referred by and/or funded by the local agency.

Licensing regulations are designed to protect children. They set limits on the number and ages of children that can be cared for in a single home. They also set requirements for health, safety, sanitation, program, nutrition, and record-keeping.

Although a license or certificate does not guarantee quality, it does provide safeguards. The family day care provider must be knowledgeable about children, or willing to learn. The provider and his/her family must be healthy, have good character references, and be financially stable. The day care home must meet local fire, health, zoning, and/or building codes.

A license to operate a family day care home is valid for one year and can be renewed. There is no charge. The licensing process can take several months, so it's wise to start early.

For more information about licensing regulations, contact your county department of social services, or call the New York State Department of Social Services toll-free number (1-800-342-3715) and ask for the address and phone number of the regional licensing office nearest you. In New York City, contact the New York City Department of Health, 125 Worth St., New York, N.Y. 10013 (212-334-7814) or the Agency for Child Development, 240 Church St., New York, N.Y. 10013 (212-553-6468).

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TAXES

The income from a family day care business is subject to three major taxes: Social Security Tax, Federal Income Tax, and State Income Tax.

Social Security Tax: A family day care provider is considered to be a self-employed person, whose income is subject to the Social Security Tax. Payments are applied toward Social Security retirement benefits.

Income Taxes: A family day care provider must report earnings. New tax laws that allow parents to claim child care expenses require the parents to name their child care provider. A provider who doesn't report income could be charged with defrauding the government.

Many of the costs involved in operating a family day care business can be deducted as business expenses. In most cases, only licensed or certified family day care homes are entitled to take business deductions. The family day care provider must be able to show receipts and/or cancelled checks to prove all deductions.

The Internal Revenue Service and the Small Business Administration can be helpful. They offer several free publications that are useful to family day care providers:

To contact the Internal Revenue Service, call toll-free 1-800-462-1860. Ask for:
"Business Use of Your Home" (Publication 587)
"Child Care and Disabled Dependent Care" (Publication 503)

To contact the Small Business Administration, call toll-free 1-800-433-7212. Ask for:
"Getting the Facts for Income Tax Reporting" (Small Marketers Aid #144)
"Steps in Meeting Your Tax Obligations" (Small Marketers Aid #142)
List of Publications

Additional References and Suggested Readings:

Harms, Thelma et al. Homebased Day Care Training Materials. Chapel Hill, NC: The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, 1981.

New York State Department of Social Services. Family Day Care Homes: Regulations of the New York State Department of Social Services; Guidelines Providing Interpretations of These Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1979.

Pinsky, Dorothy et al. Family Day Care Exchange. (North Central Regional Extension Publications #128 a-l). Ames, Iowa: Educational Materials Project, Iowa State University.

Seefeldt, Carol and Dittman, Laura, Editors. Family Day Care. (Number 9 in the "Day Care" Series) Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1973.

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FAMILY DAY CARE RECORDS AND INSURANCE

by Polly Spedding
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Keeping good records is a must for the family day care provider. Important records might be filed under these headings:

INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN'S RECORDS

A folder for each child should contain information about the child and his/her family. It might include:

- the child's name, age, birthday, address, telephone, immunization and other health records, special interests and/or needs, progress notes, attendance
- the parent's name(s), address and telephone if different from the child's, number where parents can be reached during the day, work schedule
- other information: agreements on fees, permissions/authorizations, emergency numbers, other persons who are authorized to pick up the child from day care, memos/notes/correspondence with parents

BUSINESS RECORDS

Business and financial records will be needed for a variety of reasons, including tax reporting. Records should include:

- children's attendance records (especially important if fees are charged by hour or day)
- income from parent fees -- payment records, copies of receipts given to parents
- license/certification information
- tax information
- receipts, cancelled checks, grocery tapes, auto mileage (for business)
- insurance papers
- equipment guarantees and warranties
- maintenance and repair records
- enrollment and operating policies and procedures

PROGRAM RECORDS

The program in a family day care home is a balanced schedule of play activities, meals, and naps. Records should include:

- daily/weekly/monthly plans for children's activities
- ideas for games, toys, art, music, special events (birthdays, holidays, etc.)
- field trips

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FOOD AND NUTRITION RECORDS

- menus
- recipes
- nutrition information
- Child Care Food Program information, if applicable

Most of the references listed below contain samples of forms that can make record-keeping easier. Often, a local Child Care Council can provide samples. County Departments of Social Services often provide forms for family day care homes certified by their agency.

In addition to records on the children and business, the family day care provider should keep a file of professional information, including educational publications and materials from meetings, workshops, and conferences.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT INSURANCE

Accidents do happen, even in the most careful home, so it's wise to have insurance protection. Some tenant's or homeowner's policies provide liability coverage for family day care, but many do not. Some insurance policies only cover a certain number of children; most require that the day care home be licensed. It's best to check current insurance and add any additional coverage that might be needed. If children will be transported by the care provider, be sure that automobile insurance coverage is adequate.

Some family day care providers also ask parents what insurance they have that might cover their children when they are away from their own homes. This information should be included in the individual children's folders.

References and Suggested Readings:

CCH Editorial Staff. Tax Incentives for Employer-Sponsored Day Care Programs. Chicago, Ill: Commerce Clearing House, 1982.

Harms, Thelma et al. Homebased Day Care Training Materials. Chapel Hill, NC: The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, 1981.

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FAMILY DAY CARE III:4
ARRANGING THE HOME
PCS Rev. 6/83

child care notebook

ARRANGING THE FAMILY DAY CARE HOME ENVIRONMENT

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Family day care is a "home away from home" for children whose parents are away for all or part of a day. The home-like environment provides many opportunities for children to learn and develop--socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

In most family day care homes, the children use the house, yard, and neighborhood just as they would at their own homes. At the same time, the care provider and his/her family live in the family day care home all the time; they have needs and rights, too. Careful arrangment of space can help avoid conflicts.

Children need space for many things*:

- space for many different kinds of play--quiet play, noisy play, active play, messy play
- space to move around safely, indoors and out--to crawl, climb, run, jump, explore
- space to play or work quietly--for books, puzzles, blocks, art, music
- space to relax and be alone--a quiet corner, a big box, a bean bag chair
- spaces that help them learn to do things for themselves--child-size tables and chairs; labelled toy shelves or containers; individual coat hooks, toothbrushes, and washcloths; a sturdy stool for reaching the sink; a potty chair
- spaces to keep their own special belongings--a cubby or plastic pan for that much-loved toy, hobby materials, things that they are not expected to share

The family day care provider needs space for:

- storing day care equipment
- filing day care records
- doing quiet work--planning, record-keeping, paying bills, writing letters and notes

The provider's family needs space for:

- belongings that are not shared with the day care children
- privacy for relaxing, studying, entertaining friends

*Adapted with permission from "Space to Play and Learn" by Thelma Harms and Debby Cryer. Homebased Day Care Training Materials (see "References and Suggested Readings").

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Balancing these needs is not always easy, especially if the day care home is small, but it can be done.

ASK YOURSELF*:

- What kinds of space do you need to take care of children of different ages--for the baby to crawl, the toddler to wander and explore, the preschooler to build with blocks, the school-age child to "let off steam"?
- What can you set up indoors for children to do--in the kitchen, livingroom, bathroom, bedroom?
- Where will the children rest or sleep? Where will they have meals and snacks?
- Where can you set up a safe place for the children to play outdoors? If your outdoor space is limited, where can you take the children for walks or active outdoor play?
- Is there an extra space you can use just for day care things--a spare room for the children to play in, a closet and/or shelves for their toys?
- Can you clear space in a room or two by rearranging the furniture?
- What spaces and equipment do you have that can do "double duty?"
- Which spaces and equipment will be "off limits" to the day care children? How can you and your family set these limits and keep them?

References and Suggested Readings:

Harms, Thelma et al. Homebased Day Care Training Materials. Chapel Hill, NC: The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center, 1981.

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PLANNING THE DAY IN FAMILY DAY CARE

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Most family day care providers agree that they are more than "just babysitters." A quality family day care provider is a skilled, knowledgeable person who provides loving care in a home setting -- often for many hours each day. The good provider offers a balanced "program" that has all the necessary ingredients for each child's healthy growth and development -- social, emotional, intellectual, and physical.

A typical day in a family day care home provides many opportunities for learning. We know that children learn best when they feel secure and loved. We also know that children learn in many ways:

- through play
- through taking part in household routines
- by talking and listening
- by watching and imitating
- through exploring, experimenting, creating
- from other children
- from parents, care providers, and other adults

The planning that the family day care provider does to provide these learning opportunities throughout the day makes the difference between family day care and babysitting.

Most children like to know that things will happen in a dependable order. They respond well to changes of pace, so the day should include quiet times as well as active ones, "free choice" activities as well as planned ones, and regular times for snacks, meals, and rest or naps. The daily program should always be flexible enough to allow care provider and children to enjoy unexpected events like a rainbow, or a visit from a favorite friend.

The chart on the following page is offered as a guide to planning a day in family day care.

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A Suggested Day
The times given are only approximate and will depend on the situation.

	Infants	Toddlers	Preschoolers	School Age
7 am	All children and their families are greeted warmly as they arrive. Many of the children will require some nourishment now, depending on their needs.			
	Babies may be changed, fed, and allowed to rest.	Some children may want to 'cat nap' or be rocked or cuddled for a while. Quiet toys—beads to string puzzles, dolls, books—can be available.		After eating, the children can read, finish homework, watch TV, or play a quiet game until time for school.
9 am	When the baby wakes, and feeding is completed, a game of peek-a-boo, or other play is enjoyed. Put the baby's seat or playpen near the activity of the children so he can watch.	Special Activities Art activities—painting, drawing, modeling, or other activity—cooking, playing with water or sand, making puppets, might be prepared for the children for in or outdoor play.		
		A light snack is enjoyed midway through the morning.		
	Babies will probably require a full morning nap.	Many toddlers will require a full nap.	Preschoolers may need a quiet time to stretch out and rest.	
11 am	Some time for outdoor play—a walk around the block, to the store or playground—can be planned; following this period of active play, the children prepare for lunch by washing, helping with the food preparation or reading stories.			
Noon	Babies may be fed earlier, and may be ready for an afternoon nap.	Toddlers can learn to feed themselves.	Preschoolers can set the table, help to prepare the meal and help and clean up.	Lunch is ready for the children.
		After lunch help the children brush teeth and prepare for nap. Toddlers will probably require a full nap.	Preschoolers can brush their own teeth and prepare for rest. Many will nap, others will rest by playing quietly.	
1 pm	The children are allowed to sleep as long as they wish. Usually a refreshing drink or snack is welcome after napping.			
3 pm	Floor play—with baby placed on a blanket or in a playpen—can be planned	Active in and/or outdoor play follows nap. Some special activity, a game, story, or walk can be arranged.		A snack is ready for the children or they can fix their own. The children decide what to do with their time—building, sewing, painting, doing homework, going to clubs, listening to records, playing with friends.
5 pm	Preparing the children for going home helps them to make a smooth transition from your home to theirs. This is a good time for story reading, to gather together the things that each child will take home, or perhaps for a light snack to tide the children over until their parents prepare dinner.			

From: Seefeldt, Carol, & Dittmann, Laura L. (Eds.). Day Care-9-Family Day Care. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare Office of Child Development, 1973.

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EMPLOYERS, PARENTS, AND CHILD CARE: SOME BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

One of the more recent developments in child care is the increasing involvement of employers in day care. Because they can realize a number of benefits for themselves and their workers, many companies are exploring the feasibility of providing some form of child care services for their workers.

Through involvement in day care, employers can enjoy tax credits, increased worker productivity, reduced absenteeism and turnover, recruitment advantages, and enhanced community image and public relations.

Reliable, high-quality child care services can give working parents the peace of mind that results in higher morale, increased job satisfaction, and reduced stress.

As a result of employer involvement in child care, communities often gain needed services and/or a measure of financial stability for existing services.

These benefits can be realized through a variety of child care options which can be tailored to meet specific needs and concerns. It can take anywhere from a few months to over a year to implement a plan for employer involvement. The following steps are important, although the order in which they are taken may vary.

Assess and analyze the needs of parents, employers, and the community.

Assess and analyze the availability and needs of existing programs and services.

Considerable information is essential for the planning process: employment patterns, numbers and ages of children, parent preferences, and existing resources are just a few. Child care services are part of a community system. Existing programs often represent parent preferences; they also contribute to the economy of the community. A careful needs assessment and analysis takes these factors into account.

Consider the options for employer involvement

There are a number of ways employers can become involved in child care:

- by providing child care services at or near the worksite
- by providing child care services at or near employees' homes
- by supporting existing community services
- by supporting new community services
- through a variety of personnel practices
- through a combination of some -- or all -- of the above

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Identify people who should participate in planning and decision-making.

A successful plan for employer involvement will depend on the participation of parents, representatives from both labor and management, child care specialists, and community leaders. Though not all of them need to be involved during the entire process, it's important that each stage of planning and decisionmaking involves the people who can provide needed information and who will be affected by the final decision.

Consider and analyze incentives and benefits.

Consider and analyze costs and "non-incentives."

Employer involvement in child care can provide tangible benefits to both employer and employee (like tax credits) as well as less tangible ones (like public relations for an employer, or peace of mind for parents). At the same time, various options involve various costs. Advantages and disadvantages should be weighed carefully.

Design a plan that most closely meets the needs of children, working parents, employers, and the community.

There is no magic formula for employer involvement in child care. A successful design must be carefully tailored to the specific situation by planners who are committed to improving the quality of life for workers and their families.

Several of these basic considerations are discussed more fully in other pages of this section of the Child Care Notebook. For additional pages and/or copies, consult your local Cooperative Extension office.

References and Suggested Readings:

Baden, Clifford & Dana E. Friedman, Editors. New Management Initiatives for Working Parents: Reports from an April 1981 Conference. Boston, Mass.: Wheelock College, Office of Continuing Education, 1981.

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ASSESSING CHILD CARE NEEDS

by Polly Spedding
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Employers and employees both have needs that can be met through a well-designed plan for employer-supported child care. Because child care services are part of a community system, the needs of the community must also be considered.

What are some of the needs?

Employers might want to:

- reduce absenteeism, tardiness, turnover caused by employees' problems with or lack of child care
- enhance recruitment of new employees
- reduce costs of recruitment and training by retaining more current employees
- increase employee morale and attitude toward their jobs and the company
- comply with equal opportunity/affirmative action commitments
- gain tax benefits

Employees might be looking for:

- information about child care services in the community
- referral to child care services
- additional care, different kinds of care, or more convenient locations for care than are currently available
- financial assistance in paying for care for their children

The community might need:

- information about what types of child care are currently available and what types may be lacking
- a mechanism for making this information available to parents and employers
- financial support for expansion of existing services
- increased public awareness about the importance of quality child care to the optimum development of children
- increased public awareness about the benefits of child care to the community

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A successful plan for employer involvement in child care will be based on a careful evaluation of these needs. There are a number of ways to gather the necessary information: If there is a child care information and referral service and/or a child care council in the community, they may be able to provide some data. Individual child care programs can provide information about their waiting lists (caution: some families may be on more than one list). Personnel offices and labor unions at local companies may have noted employee concerns about child care. A local Private Industry Council may have received expressions of interest by employers and/or labor unions.

The most common way to find out who needs what (and when, and where, and how much) is to do a "needs assessment," using questionnaires or interviews. A number of good needs assessments are already available. Some of them are included in the references listed at the bottom of this page. Another source is from businesses or groups who have already gone through the process; they're often willing to share their assessment forms and also to offer advice based on their experience.

It's usually not possible to use someone else's needs assessment without adapting it for the specific company or community. Whatever its final form, certain characteristics are important:

- The needs assessment should be well advertised.
- The purpose and use should be clearly explained.
- The person/business/group that is conducting the assessment should be identified.
- The assessment should be brief enough to be completed quickly, or the rate of return may be very low.
- Questions should be carefully worded to avoid employee reluctance about discussing family problems. Anonymous returns are recommended.

Needs assessments can stimulate considerable interest which, in turn, may create expectations within the company or the community. There should be a serious interest on the part of the planners before they proceed to assess needs.

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OPTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

by Polly Spedding
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Employer involvement in child care is not new. Industry-sponsored day care existed in the United States in the early 1900's, multiplied during World War II, then decreased as women workers left the factories after the war.

What is new is the number of options and/or combinations of options that are available to employers. Prompted by attractive incentives and a growing interest in humanizing the workplace, employers can take a variety of approaches to meet individual needs and concerns.

The list which follows outlines the most commonly mentioned options for employer involvement:

DIRECT SERVICES PROVIDED BY EMPLOYERS FOR EMPLOYEES:

- "On-Site" Day Care -- employer operates day care center at or near the worksite; employees usually pay reduced fees, employer subsidizes the difference
- Family Day Care Network -- employer recruits and trains family day care providers, usually near employees' homes; employer subsidizes some costs
- "Vendor" Program ("Purchase of slots") -- employer buys spaces ("slots") for children in specific programs and resells the spaces to employees, usually at reduced cost
- "Voucher" Program -- employer provides coupons worth a specified amount of money; employees use coupons to pay for child care in programs of their choice, sometimes at reduced cost
- Consortium -- employer joins with other employers and/or unions to provide child care services for employees or to provide "start-up" funds for child care
- Information and Referral Service -- employer recruits and lists qualified centers and home-based programs and refers employees to them
- Assistance for Special Needs -- employer provides or reimburses employee for a sick child, medical emergencies necessitating child care, occasional child care for work-related reasons, special programs for school-age children, handicapped children, etc.
- Contributions -- employer donates money, goods or services (food, supplies, personnel, accounting help, printing, etc.) to specific child care program(s) in exchange for reduced fees for employees

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ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS:

- Contributions and donations (money, equipment, supplies, services) to one or more child care programs in a community.
- Contributions to community fund-raising agencies, with instructions that the contributions be used to support child care
- Funding for staff development/training/consultants for one or more programs
- Funding for child care councils, child advocacy groups
- Funding for Information & Referral Service operated by a community agency/group
- Contracting with community agency for care for sick children, special services
- Providing space/utilities/maintenance for an "on-site" day care center, operated by an independent child care agency
- Active involvement in advocacy groups and child care programs in order to seek adequate funds and services for child care

PERSONNEL PRACTICES:

- Extended leave for new parents
- Leave for care of a sick child
- Alternative work schedules -- flextime, job-sharing, compressed work week
- Permanent part-time employment opportunities, with benefits
- Work at home
- Parent counseling services, parent seminars
- "Cafeteria" benefits plan, which offers employees choices from a variety of benefits, including child care services

References and Suggested Readings

Baden, Clifford & Dana E. Friedman, Editors. New Management Initiatives for Working Parents: Reports from an April 1981 Conference. Boston, Mass.: Wheelock College, Office of Continuing Education, 1981.

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CHOOSING THE RIGHT OPTION

by Polly Spedding
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Company INC is interested in offering some form of child care for its employees. Over the past year, current employees as well as prospective ones have asked about child care, and the company lost several good workers because of child care-related problems. The company is aware that by investing in child care, it can gain tax advantages and other benefits.

Several months ago, the company formed and funded a Child Care Task Force, which includes representatives from top management, organized labor, and parents. With the help of community-based child care professionals, the Task Force completed a careful needs assessment and surveyed existing child care services in the community. They also talked with other companies who were offering various child care services.

The Task Force findings showed that the company should go ahead. The company agreed with the findings and asked the Task Force to recommend a feasible plan.

How will they choose the plan that is "just right" for Company INC, its workers, and the community?*

To be "just right," a plan for employer involvement in child care should be tailored to meet specific needs and produce the greatest benefits.

An infinite number of options and/or combinations are possible; there are probably new approaches waiting to be discovered. Every possibility has advantages and disadvantages. Because each company and community is unique, the advantages and disadvantages must be carefully considered by planners who are thoroughly familiar with the local situation.

The charts on pages IV:4 a-f briefly outline the most commonly mentioned advantages and disadvantages of various child care options. It's important to remember that these are general guidelines and may vary from one situation to another.

*NOTE: Company INC is fictitious. However, the process that Company INC follows in our case study is similar to the experience of the Corning Glass Works, as told in The Corning Story: Solving the Puzzle of Industry-Sponsored Day Care (see References and Resources).

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The information on the charts was drawn from the references and resources listed below. For your convenience, we have included the source and cost of each reference. This information is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.

References and Resources:

The Corning Story: Solving the Puzzle of Industry-Sponsored Day Care. Corning Children's Center, P.O. Box II, Corning, N.Y. 14830. Free.

Employers and Child Care: Establishing Services Through the Workplace by Kathryn Senn Perry. Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, D.C. 20210. Pamphlet 23, 1981. Single copies free.

Employers and Child Care (Reprint #9). Child Care Information Exchange. C-44, Redmond, Washington 98052, 1981. $2.50.

Employer-Sponsored Child Care: Four Issues Papers by Governor's Advisory Committee on Child Development Programs, 1600 Ninth St., Rm 105, Sacramento, CA 95814, 1981. $3.00.

"Help for Employers Considering Child Care" by Gwen Morgan. Day Care and Early Education magazine, Fall, 1981. Consent to copy given for personal or internal use on payment of 95¢ per-copy to Copyright Clearance Center, Inc. Contact Human Sciences Press, 72 Fifth Ave., New York, NY. 10011.

"Industry-Related Day Care: Trends and Options" by Marce Verzaro-Lawrence, Denise LeBlanc and Charls Hennon. Young Children magazine, NAEYC, January, 1982. 1834 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009. Single reprints $1.00. Request permission for multiple copies.

Legal Aspects of Child Care As an Employee Benefit by Kathleen A. Murray, Attorney at Law. Bay Care Child Care Law Project Publications, 9 First St. (at Market), Suite 219, San Francisco, CA 94105, $1.00.

New Management Initiatives for Working Parents: Reports from an April 1981 Conference by Clifford Baden & Dana E. Friedman, Editors. Wheelock College, Office of Continuing Education, 200 The Riverway, Boston, Mass. 02215, 1981. $11.00.

On-Site Day Care: The State of the Art and Models Development by Welfare Research, Incorporated. Available from Molly Hardy, Executive Director, Empire State Day Care Services, Inc., Empire State Plaza, Agency Bldg. #2 - 12th Floor, Albany, N.Y. 12223, 1980. $10.00. (Price includes a separate bibliography volume.)

Selected Highlights of Corporations' Experiences with Employer-Sponsored Child Care. NYS Council on Children and Families, Tower Building, 28th Floor, Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY. 12223. Free.

Tax Incentives for Employer-Sponsored Day Care Programs. Commerce Clearing House, Inc., 4025 W. Peterson Ave., Chicago, ILL. 60646, 1982. $1.00 plus postage.

OPTION	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES		
	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/Community
ON-SITE DAY CARE	ADVANTAGES: • Improve employee morale, productivity • Lower absenteeism, turnover • Enhance recruitment • Aid affirmative action • Enhance public image • Tax deductions • Quality of care can be monitored by company and parents DISADVANTAGES: • May require substantial capital investment • Requires careful study of any industrial health, safety hazards to children • Company responsible for liability in case of accident • Initial enrollment often lower than expected, which can increase costs	ADVANTAGES: • Meets preference for center-based care • Feeling of security about reliability & quality of care • Eliminates transportation of preschoolers to other centers • Able to visit children during day • Children learn about parents' work • Reduced fees • Tax credits available DISADVANTAGES: • Might prefer another type of child care • Location might present transportation problems on urban bus systems, and/or for school-age children	ADVANTAGES: • Financial support enhances stability, quality of care • Center might accept number/percent of children from community DISADVANTAGES: • Attendance affected by lay-offs, seasonal employment • Initial enrollment often lower than expected

OPTION	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES		
	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/Community
FAMILY DAY CARE NETWORK	ADVANTAGES: • Improve employee morale, productivity • Lower absenteeism, turnover • Enhance recruitment • Aid affirmative action • Enhance public image • Tax deductions • Lower capital investment than on-site center • Less responsibility for liability than on-site center DISADVANTAGES: • Less control over quality of care than on-site center • Requires specialized staff to recruit, coordinate, train caregivers and to provide referrals for employees • Requires "back-up" system, in case of caregiver illness	ADVANTAGES; • Meets preference for home-based care • Feeling of security about reliability of care • Cost of care may be reduced • Tax credits available DISADVANTAGES: • Might prefer another type of child care • Day care home might not offer all services needed • Quality of care may vary from home to home • Location might present transportation problems • Care might be suddenly unavailable due to caregiver illness	ADVANTAGES: • Financial support provides measure of stability • Training provided by employer enhances quality of care • Day care homes might also accept other children from neighborhood DISADVANTAGES: • Attendance affected by layoffs, seasonal employment

OPTION	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES		
	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/Community
"VENDOR" PROGRAM (PURCHASE OF SLOTS)	ADVANTAGES: • Improve employee morale productivity • Lower absenteeism, turnover • Enhance recruitment • Aid affirmative action • Enhance public image and community relations • Tax deductions • No capital investment • Little or no liability in case of accidents DISADVANTAGES: • Less direct control over program quality than on-site center or family day care network	ADVANTAGES: • Feeling of security about reliability of care • Cost of care may be reduced • Tax credits available DISADVANTAGES: • Little or no choice in type of care • Might prefer another type of child care • Location might present transportation problems	ADVANTAGES: • Financial support provides measure of security stability • Financial support may offset other costs DISADVANTAGES: • Financial support only helpful to program(s) selected by employer

OPTION

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/Community
"VOUCHER" PROGRAM	ADVANTAGES: • Improve employee morale, productivity • Lower absenteeism, turnover • Enhance recruitment • Aid affirmative action • Enhance public image and community relations • Tax deductions • No capital investment • No liability in case of accident DISADVANTAGES: • Company has no control over quality of program(s)	ADVANTAGES: • Parent has full control over type of care and location • Feeling of security about reliability and quality of care • Cost of care may be reduced • Tax credits available DISADVANTAGES: • Community may not offer all types of care/services needed	ADVANTAGES: • Income from vouchers provides some financial security DISADVANTAGES: • Financial support only helpful to those programs chosen by parents

OPTION	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES		
	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/Community
CONSORTIUM	ADVANTAGES: • Enables small businesses, unions to share costs and responsibilities • Enhance public image and community relations • Tax deductions • Other advantages will depend on options(s) chosen DISADVANTAGES: • Withdrawal of one or more businesses increases costs & responsibilities of others • May be competition among consortium members for public image benefits • Other disadvantages will depend on option(s) chosen	ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES • Will depend on option(s) offered by consortium	ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES • Will depend on option(s) offered by consortium
INFORMATION AND REFERRAL	ADVANTAGES: • Enhance employee relations • Enhance public image and community relations • Tax deductions DISADVANTAGES: • Little, if any, control over quality of care	ADVANTAGES: • Eases problems of finding child care DISADVANTAGES: • Community may not offer all types of care/services needed	ADVANTAGES: • Service may be available to all parents in community • Data on requests might highlight needed services in community

OPTION	ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES		
	For Employers	For Parents	For Program/community
ASSISTANCE TO COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (donations, special funds, advocacy)	ADVANTAGES: • Enhance public image and community relations • No capital investment • Tax deductions available for financial assistance • If used to reduce parent fees, may increase employee morale, productivity DISADVANTAGES" • Little, if any, company control over quality of programs	ADVANTAGES: • Employer assistance might reduce parent fees	ADVANTAGES: • Assistance provides some security, stability • Financial assistance received may off-set some other costs DISADVANTAGES: • Distribution of assistance may be unequal/uneven among programs in community
PERSONNEL PRACTICES (flextime, job-share, extended leaves, etc.)	ADVANTAGES: • Improve employee morale, productivity • Enhance recruitment • Lower employee turnover • Aid affirmative action • Enhance public image DISADVANTAGES • Requires special policy considerations • May require specialized record-keeping	ADVANTAGES: • Parents able to spend more time with their children • Reduce stress • Increased job satisfaction	

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE V:I
ORGANIZING FOR ACTION
PCS 1/83

child care notebook

ORGANIZING A SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The dramatic rise in the numbers of two-paycheck and single parent families has focused increasing attention on the need for child care programs for school-age children before and/or after school, and at times when school is not in session.

Good school-age child care can relieve parental anxiety, reduce vandalism and juvenile mischief in the community, and provide youngsters with a variety of activities geared to their individual needs and interests.

Organizing and implementing a program for school-age child care can take a year or more. Groups who have been successful suggest that the following tasks are important. The order in which they are taken may vary; some may need to be done simultaneously.

Get interested people together.

Contact parents, school principals and teachers, child care providers, sponsors of youth organizations, youth service workers, church groups, adult service clubs-anyone and everyone with an interest in children. Talk about your perception of the need. Organize a "core committee" of people who will take responsibility for the many tasks that will need to be done.

Get accurate information about the need for school-age child care.

To assess and analyze the need, use brief surveys or questionnaires. Collect information from parents, schools, information/referral services, child care councils, youth and social service agencies. Find out how many children need care, what ages, where they are located, what kind of care parents prefer. Be aware that your surveys may raise expectations, so word them carefully. Let people know the results through newspaper and radio releases, letters, personal contacts, and public meetings. Positive publicity can help develop a broad base of support.

Gather information about existing programs.

Assess the availability and use of various programs in the community for school-age children. What day care programs are already available? What after-school clubs, youth groups, recreation programs are there? What programs are available during school holidays and summer? Where are the various programs located? How many children can they serve? What ages? What hours and days? What fees do they charge? What are their capabilities for expansion?

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Consider the options:

There are a number of good ways to provide school-age child care:

- in schools
- in day care centers or nursery schools
- in family day care homes
- in youth recreation facilities (Y's, Boys Clubs, Girls Clubs, Park Departments)
- in churches, community buildings, Grange halls, etc.
- in the child's own home
- through combinations of the above

Think about parent preference, availablility of space, transportation, legal requirements (licensing, insurance, etc.) costs, program quality. Above all, think about the developmental needs of school-age children.

Look for potential sponsors.

Possible sponsors include school systems, parent groups, day care programs, youth programs, church groups, employers, social service agencies. Don't overlook the possibility of co-sponsors and coalitions.

Design a plan that best suits the needs of parents, children and the community.

There is no magic formula for school-age child care. Each community must design a program which meets its own unique needs.

Additional pages of this section of the Child Care Notebook discuss school-age child care options and considerations in more detail. For copies, consult your local Cooperative Extension home economist.

References and Suggested Readings:

Baden, Ruth K. et al. School-Age Child Care: An Action Manual. Boston: Auburn House,1982.

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE V:2
CHOOSING A SETTING
PCS 1/83

child care notebook

CHOOSING A SETTING FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

There are many possible settings for providing care for groups of school-age children before and/or after school and at times when school is not in session. School-age child care programs can be located in school buildings, day care centers, family day care homes, youth recreation facilities, churches, and community buildings. The possibilities seem almost endless.

Each type of setting has advantages and disadvantages which must be carefully weighed; what may work well for one community may not work at all for another. Most communities would probably benefit from having more than one setting available for school-age youngsters. In making choices, a number of considerations are important.

LOCATION:

- Is the location convenient to the schools that the children attend? If not, is transportation available or could it be made available?
- Is the location convenient for parents?
- Is the location convenient to other community activities and facilities that the children might use? If not, is transportation available or could it be made available?
- Is the area safe?

FACILITY:

- Does the facility meet licensing, zoning, building, health, and safety requirements?
- Is there enough indoor space for the number of children to be enrolled? (Plan on at least 35 square feet per child, not counting kitchen, bathrooms, offices, or hallways.)
- Is the facility appropriate for school-age children? Will they find it attactive? Can they have their own space, separate from preschoolers or other programs that may use the same building?
- Can the indoor space be arranged to provide for activities that meet the needs and interests of different age/developmental levels? Is there space for quiet activities as well as noisy ones? Is there room for private times? Group times? Active games and sports?

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- Is there enough room to expand and/or add additional services?
- Are there adequate bathroom facilities? Adequate heat, light, ventilation? Hot and cold water? Cooking facilities?
- Is there enough storage space?
- Is there plenty of outdoor space? Is it suitable for a variety of games and activities for different age/developmental levels? If outdoor space is limited, are there other play areas or facilities nearby? If not, is transportation available or can it be arranged?
- Can the facility be used year-round? If it's a school building, will it be available during school vacations and holidays?
- What will it cost to use the facility?
- What are the terms of the lease or rental agreement? Are the rights and responsibilities of both landlord and tenant spelled out? Is there a termination clause? An option to renew?

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND PHILOSOPHY:

- Who will sponsor the program? What are the roles and responsibilities of the sponsor or sponsors?
- Who will actually administer the program? What are the roles and responsibilities of the administrator?
- What will the enrollment and fee policies be?
- What will the rights and responsibilities of parents be?
- Will there be a governing board, a board of directors, or an advisory board? Who will serve? What will their responsibilities be?
- Will the program be responsive to the needs, interests and capabilities of school-age children?

References and Suggested Readings:

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE V:3
EQUIPMENT
PCS 1/83

child care notebook

EQUIPMENT FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

To a very large extent, equipment for a school-age child care program will depend upon the age/developmental levels of the children enrolled. Most programs serve youngsters from ages 5-12; within this wide age range are many diverse needs, interests, and capabilities.

In general, children in the "middle years" of childhood are industrious, curious, and social. Because they are moving toward independence, they need opportunities to develop skills, take responsibility, and gain self-confidence. They need adults to talk to, although they may resent adult interference. They enjoy interacting with each other in small, informal groups as well as more structured "clubs" and "teams".

A good school-age child care program provides a comfortable home-like atmosphere that allows opportunities for children to rest and relax, let off steam, choose from a variety of interesting "non-academic" activities, and interact with each other and with sympathetic, caring adults. Some programs encourage the children to do homework; others feel it is the responsibility of the child's parents.

One popular way to provide for children in this wide age range is to arrange the space and equipment in interest areas. These might include:

QUIET AREAS--rugs, bean bag chairs, sofas, table and chairs of appropriate size, books, magazines, shelves and racks, puzzles, table games, cards, radio, record player, etc. Access to a telephone is very important.

CREATIVE DRAMATICS--old clothes, makeup, puppets, cardboard boxes, etc.

BLOCKS--unit blocks, hollow blocks, block accessories (cars, trucks, people, animals, in scale to the blocks)

ARTS, CRAFTS, AND HOBBIES--tables, chairs, paper, paints, glue, scissors, clay, sewing, knitting and weaving supplies, woodworking tools and supplies, etc. Places for storing individual collections and "work in progress" is essential.

SNACKS AND COOKING--refrigerator, hot plate or access to kitchen, utensils, etc.

OUTDOOR PLAY--sports equipment, jump ropes, large spools, planks, tires, wagons, roller skates, sleds, etc. (If outdoor space is limited or weather is inclement, indoor space should be provided, or access to community recreation facilities should be arranged.)

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If space allows, equipment for science, nature, gardening, music, and dance might also be included. Considerable thought should also be given to equipment that provides efficient storage space and/or can be used to create pleasant traffic patterns. Equipment may be needed for eating and sleeping, depending on the ages of the children and the hours they are in the program.

For the adults who work in the program, equipment will be needed for offices, kitchen, staff meeting/lounge area, housekeeping, and maintenance.

It's wise to check State Day Care Licensing Regulations and local codes before investing any money. Special requirements apply to some equipment, especially for kitchen, bathrooms, heating, and fire safety.

Cost is a major factor in choosing equipment. It's possible that some can be made, donated, or scrounged. In general, it's best to choose quality over quantity, multi-purpose over single, and to economize on the adult areas rather than those used by the children.

References and Suggested Readings:

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Mazur, Rosaleen and Pine, Barbara. The Middle Years: Six-Eleven. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Cooperative Extension, reprinted 1981.

NYS Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations and Family Day Care Homes: Regulations and Guidelines.

Northeast 4-H Leadership Committee. Boys, Girls and Youth Programs: Guide for Leaders. New Brunswick, N.J.: Cooperative Extension Services of the Northeast States.

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child care notebook

STAFFING THE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAM

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Probably the most important key to the success of a school-age child care program is the quality of the staff and the way its members relate to the children, parents, and each other.

Adults who work with school-age children should be warm, sympathetic, dependable, and healthy. They should not only like and understand school-agers, but they should be enthusiastic about working with them. One of the major roles of staff is to provide good adult models for the boys and girls who are enrolled in the program.

Titles for staff vary. "Caregiver" is a term used by many group programs to refer to all staff who work directly with children. Other programs may use the terms "Counselor", "Child Care Worker", or "Teacher". Some programs use "Teacher" only for professional staff (with college degrees) and "Assistant" or "Aide" for paraprofessionals. Whatever the titles they use, most programs strive for a balance of men and women, professionals and paraprofessionals, and different cultural/ethnic/racial backgrounds.

The number of caregivers in a group program depends upon the number of children, the size of the groups, and the number of hours the program is open. New York State Day Care Licensing Regulations establish certain standards for school-age programs in centers and in family day care homes.

In Day Care Centers*:

- For 5-Year-Olds, a staff ratio of 1 adult to 8 children with a maximum group size of 24, or 1 adult to 9 children, maximum group size 18
- For 6- to 10-Year-Olds, a staff ratio of 1 adult to 10 children, maximum group size 20
- For 10- to 14-Year-Olds, a staff ratio of 1 adult to 15 children, maximum group size 30

In Family Day Care Homes*:

- Usually, no more than 6 children can be cared for by a family day care provider (including the provider's own children under 6 years of age)
  BUT
- No more than 5 children can be cared for at any one time if one or more of the children in the home are under 3 years of age

*NOTE: It is important to check New York State Licensing Regulations for other qualifications and limitations regarding staff positions.

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In addition to the caregiving/teaching staff, most group programs need support staff members, who provide the services that enrich the program and keep it running smoothly. Cook, secretary, bookkeeper, maintenance staff, nurse, social worker, bus drivers--all must have certain skills. Since they also interact with the children, it's important that they know and understand them.

The size of the support staff depends on the size of the program and the services offered. Some support positions can be filled by consultants or volunteers.

Volunteers can provide extra hands and special skills. Artists, musicians, and story-tellers can be found among parents, students, senior citizens, and others. Some volunteers provide professional services (legal, medical, administrative) or serve on the program's board of directors or advisory committees.

The Director is the central figure in the program, and is also the liaison to parents and the community. In very small programs, the director may manage the program and also work with a group of children. In larger programs, the Director usually has full-time responsibility for administration and for planning and implementing the daily program for the children. In either case, management and public relations skills and a sound background in child development are essential.

One unique aspect of staffing school-age programs is the odd hours of care. Many school-age programs operate for several hours in the morning, then again for several hours in the afternoon on days when school is in session. During school holidays, vacations, early release days, and summers, longer hours of care are needed. As a result, many staff positions may be part-time, with additional hours or supplementary staff needed at various times during the year.

The importance of a well-qualified, trained staff cannot be understated. Even though staff salaries and benefits consume the lion's share of the program budget, most authorities recommend that if it is necessary to economize, it should be done in other ways.

References and Suggested Readings:

Baden, Ruth K. et al. School-Age Child Care: An Action Manual. Boston: Auburn House,1982.

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE V:5
DAILY PROGRAM
PCS 1/83

child care notebook

PLANNING THE DAILY PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

by Polly Spedding
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Program planners who understand school-age children know that it can be very difficult to meet the needs of individual children in a program that serves wide age ranges and large groups of children. The following article offers an overview of some of the considerations and guidelines in designing an appropriate program for school-age youngsters. Although the article refers specifically to "day care" programs, the suggestions can also apply to other group programs.

MEETING THE DAY CARE NEEDS OF SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN*

Source: Fairfax County School-Age Child Care Program
Fairfax, Virginia

The Need for Variety

The school-age child is, in a very real sense, "on the job" in school for a significant portion of each day. Traditionally, much of the child's workday in school is spent completing tasks and assignments (often while sitting still), following directions, and developing a variety of skills which will help him become a competent member of society. While success in school is certainly important and can be a most satisfying experience, it is also a demanding one for most children. Just as adults need leisure-time activities to develop parts of their personalities which are not or cannot be fulfilled during the workday, school-age children are also in need of experiences to supplement and complement their school day. School-age children in day care need many opportunities to enjoy themselves through a wide variety of recreational and leisure-time activities. Children need to unwind, relax, be themselves and have a good time when they come to day care.

It is truly a challenge to plan a program which will meet the individual needs and temperament of each child to be served. We know that children (as well as adult members of their families) seek a broad range of experiences in their free time. Some prefer quiet and privacy; others seek out togetherness and being part of a group. Physical activity is very important to some, while others enjoy more passive, quiet experiences. Some want to pursue challenging learning experiences; others want time for creativity and self-expression. Some respond better to a stimulating environment; others need space which is calm and relaxing. Some need a sense of accomplishment in their spare time; others need to rid themselves of the pressures of accomplisment. Not only must teachers take into account the broad range of experiences sought by children, they must also keep in mind that individual needs may change from day to day and from hour to hour. Obviously, moods swing in different directions--one day we may enjoy putting our feet up and reading a good book after work. Another day, we may feel like taking a long, vigorous hike. Day care experiences must be flexible enough and rich enough to provide for similar mood changes in individual children.

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While all children do vary in temperament and have unique needs, it is helpful to keep in mind some characteristic needs of children ages 5-11 when choosing appropriate day care experiences. Generally, children in middle childhood are social beings who seek close relations with peers and friendships with adults outside the home. They are moving towards independence and are in need of exploring how much they can do on their own. They are continuing to develop a sense of self-esteem and need opportunities for success, achievment, responsibility and acceptance. School-age children tend to be industrious and curious; they enjoy being busy collecting, inventing, exploring and creating. Certainly, they tend to be energetic and need many opportunities to express themselves through movement of the whole body in both structured activities and free play.

Guidelines for Designing a Program

- Prepare an environment which is flexible, diversified, pleasant, suitable for quiet, private moments as well as active, social times. Plan an environment which lends itself to making smooth transitions. Try to create a "homey" atmosphere.
- Plan experiences which give children opportunities to learn more about themselves through others by working in large groups, small groups, peer groups, amd multi-age groups. Maintain a balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities.
- Attempt to provide opportunities for each child to work at tasks which are obtainable, tasks which are challenging but not threatening, tasks which provide opportunities for success and the development of self-confidence.
- Give thought to the kinds of experiences needed for each child to grow in the ability to make independent choices and decisions. Plan experiences which encourage children to assume responsibility for their actions.
- Design special areas which invite individuals to experiment, explore, and create. Recognize the value of play in stimulating imagination and curiousity.
- Structure ground rules for the environment which are clear, fair, and make sense to children. Involve children in defining the rules.
- Plan experiences which encourage children to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Search for positive ways to help children surface and share their attitudes, beliefs, and opinions.
- Attempt to listen actively to children, to observe carefully their actions, and provide them with genuine, positive feedback.
- Let children know by your actions that you enjoy being with them. Make time to talk with individual children in a relaxing manner.
- Search for activities which account for each child's personal needs, activities which will be useful in helping them learn more about themselves as individuals.

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*One of a series developed through a grant from the Wellesley School-Age Child Care Project. For further information, contact Fairfax County Office for Children, 10396 Democracy Lane, Fairfax, VA 22030; phone (703) 691-3175, 2924, 2925. (Reprinted by permission.)

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE V:6
SELF-CARE PROGRAMS
PCS Rev. 6/83

child care notebook

SELF-CARE PROGRAMS FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

No one seems to know exactly how many children in the United States go home after school to empty houses or spend their time, unsupervised, at shopping areas and empty school yards until their parents pick them up after work. Conservative estimates say there are at least two million of these "latchkey" children; countless others are alone occasionally. A major concern is that these children can be lonely, afraid, and very vulnerable.

In an effort to help children cope with the problems of caring for themselves, a number of special programs have been developed which teach self-care/self-reliance skills. Although these special programs cannot take the place of adult supervision, they can provide useful learnings for the children and some reassurance for parents.

The following list of self-care programs was compiled by the School-Age Child Care Project, Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, Mass. 02181.

BAT (BASIC AID TRAINING)
American Red Cross, Minneapolis Area Chapter, Youth Services, III Dell Place at Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403.

A six-session course designed to train and certify community leaders (teachers, nurses, youth, church, recreation leaders) in a basic safety and first aid class. The class is designed for 4th-6th graders. High school students are trained, certified, and given academic credit for teaching the class to local elementary school students. Curriculum includes: fire, bleeding, poisoning, choking, animal bites, water safety, etc.

"CHATTERS"
Neighborhood Centers Day Care Association, 50905 Fannin, Houston, Texas 77004

A telephone reassurance service for school-age children, ages eight and up. For a $30 annual fee, parents enroll their child in this service. The children routinely check in with a telephone counselor, chat briefly about their day, and call whenever they feel lonely or afraid. In the event of an emergency, the counselor is available to go to the child's home. A call-waiting and call-forward system allows other children's calls to be directed to that counselor while at the child's home. A training component is built into the service, for both the child and the parent. The child learns emergency, burglary, fire, storm, and flood procedures. The parents make arrangements for the child's care in case they are delayed. Late or overnight emergency care is coordinated by "Chatters," which acts as a resource and referral service for the families, connecting them to Houston's social service agencies.

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HOMEMAKING ELEMENTARY LEARNING PROCEDURES PROJECT (HELP)
Cranston Public Schools, 845 Park Avenue, Cranston, Rhode Island 02910

A domestic-survival course for children in grades 3-6 which features lessons in how to use a needle, a vacuum cleaner, and a stove. Originally funded by the Rhode Island Department of Education and the Vocational Education Department, the Project is no longer funded separately, but is integrated into the regular school curriculum. Major equipment purchased from the original grant, such as sewing machine, cooking and cleaning appliances, and carpentry tools, are still used.

"I CAN DO IT"
Copyright by the Council of Camp Fire, 200 Statler Building, Buffalo, New York 14202

A survival/self-reliance course designed for 2nd-4th graders. Students volunteer for the eight-session course, held after school for a cost of $12. Students are shown how to operate washing machines, sew on buttons, doctor minor animal bites, iron, cook snacks, and other tasks that will give children more self-confidence about being alone after school.

"PREPARED FOR TODAY"
National Office, Boy Scouts of America, 1325 Walnut Hill Lane, Irving, Texas 75062

A program for children ages six to twelve meant to facilitate communication between parents and children. Four themes emerge: taking care of yourself when you are alone; helping your family deal with problems; stopping what might be an emergency; and helping to care for younger brothers and sisters. Six different skills are taught in the manual which include preparing snacks, knowing your neighborhood, home safety rules, as well as self-esteem builders and problem-solving.

"SURVIVAL SKILLS FOR KIDS"
Cooperative Extension Service, 901 Wythe Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Available from: Extension Distribution Center, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

A six-session self-reliance course for children ages eight to thirteen with an emphasis on "coping skills". Taught in very small groups by trained adult volunteers, the children pay only for materials used in food preparation ($6 per series). The curriculum includes: house rules; safety and emergency procedures; what to do when your friends visit after school; coping with fears and loneliness; and getting along with your brothers and sisters. Each session includes a cooking lesson to acquaint kids with nutrition, kitchen safety, and equipment.

Suggested Readings

Chaback, Elaine and Pat Fortunato. The Official Kids Survival Kit: How to do Things on Your Own. Boston: Little Brown, 1981.

Gilinsky, Rhoda M. "Important Lessons for Latchkey Kids". Working Mother, November, 1982.

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child care notebook

GROUP CARE FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS: OFF TO A GOOD START

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The dramatic increase in the numbers of two-paycheck families, single parents, and teenage parents has created a growing demand for child care services for children of all ages, and especially for children under the age of three. Although the traditional child care choices for parents of infants and toddlers have been in-home care (caregiver comes to the child's home) and family day care (child goes to the caregiver's home), there is increasing interest in providing care for groups of infants and toddlers in day care center settings.

Whether you are adding an infant/toddler program to an existing day care center or organizing a new center*, your most important responsibility--and greatest challenge--will be to provide quality care.

A quality day care program for infants and toddlers has these major goals:

- to provide safe, responsive, consistent care that enhances the growth and development of each child;
- to provide opportunities for each child to interact with other children and with a small, carefully selected group of knowledgeable, loving adults;
- to provide a "home away from home" that respects the child's family and reinforces the importance of the parent-child relationship.

Many interrelated factors will influence your ability to provide the quality care that is essential to the health and well-being of infants and toddlers. Much will depend on how sensitively the staff responds to each child; how well the physical environment, daily routines, and activities are arranged to meet each child's needs and preferences; and how well staff and parents communicate.

Many of the key factors in providing quality care for infants and toddlers are discussed briefly in this section of the Child Care Notebook. A number of other publications and audio-visuals are also available, many of which contain detailed information and guidelines. The list of references and audio-visuals that follows is offered to help you get off to a good start.

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*NOTE: For tips on starting a day care center, see Child Care Notebook, Section II.

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SELECTED REFERENCES ON GROUP CARE FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

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A Day in Day Care: A Program for Two-Year-Olds by Jennifer Birckmayer. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1981.

Day Care 2: Serving Infants edited by Dorothy S. Huntington, Sally Provence, and Ronald Parker. Washington, D.C.: Office of Child Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971.

A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care by Anne Willis and Henry Ricciuti. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1980 (third printing).

Infant and Child Care: A Guide to Education in Group Settings by William Fowler. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1980.

Infant and Toddler Programs: A Guide to Very Early Education by Christine Cataldo. Reading, Mass.: Addison Wesley, 1983.

Infant Caregiving: A Design for Training by Alice Honig and Ronald Lally. Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981.

Infants: Their Social Environments edited by Bernice Weissbourd & Judith Musick. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1981.

The Infants We Care For edited by Laura Dittman. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1973 (in revision, 1984).

AUDIO-VISUALS

(All of the following are available from Media Services Audio-Visual Resource Center, 8 Research Park, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. 14850.)

Brianna: A Two-Year-Old in a Group Setting
Videotape: color, sound, 15 minutes; with discussion guide
Produced by Phyllis Silverman at the Cornell Infant Care and Resource Center, 1980

Day Care for a Kibbutz Toddler
Film: 16 mm, color, sound, 26 minutes
Produced by Ethnography, Inc.

On Their Own/With Our Help
Film: 16 mm, color, sound, 14 minutes
Produced by the National Commission on Resources for Youth, 1978

Tyner: Shared Parenting
Videotape: color, sound, 25 minutes; with discussion guide
Produced by Phyllis Silverman at the Cornell Infant Care and Resource Center, 1980

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CHOOSING A FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT FOR AN INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

The choice of a facility and equipment for a quality program for infants and toddlers will depend on a number of factors. The following checklist can serve as a guide.

FACILITY:

- Does the facility meet licensing, zoning, building, fire, health, and safety requirements?
- Is the location convenient for the families that the program will serve? Is safe, reliable transportation available, if needed?
- Is the area safe? Is there fire and police protection?
- Is there enough indoor space for the number of children? (Plan on at least 35 square feet per child, not counting kitchen, bathrooms, offices, or halls.)
- Is there enough space for separate sleeping areas? (Be aware that cribs and changing tables take up an enormous amount of space!)
- Can the infant/toddler program have its own space, separate from preschool and school-age children?
- Is the space for the infant/toddler program on the ground floor? Are there at least two widely separated exits?
- Are the rooms attractive? Can they be made as homelike as possible?
- Is there adequate heat, light, ventilation?
- Is there a safe, plentiful supply of hot and cold water?
- Are bathroom, kitchen, and laundry facilities adequate? Is the sewage system adequate?
- Is there enough space for each child's personal belongings?
- Is there enough space for adult needs--offices, staff area, parent/visitor area, storage?
- Is there outdoor play space adjoining the building or nearby? Is the outdoor space fenced in and safe from potential dangers (traffic, creeks, ponds, poisonous plants)?

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SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT SPACE AND EQUIPMENT:

- How will the children be grouped? (By age? In mixed age/ability groups?) What equipment and space arrangements will be needed for different groups?
- Will the space and equipment encourage children to explore, experiment, develop, learn?
- Can the space and equipment be arranged to allow for interest/activity areas appropriate for the ages/developmental levels in the various groups?
- Can space and equipment be arranged so that children can interact with one another and with adults?
- Can space and equipment be arranged so that children can also play safely and constructively on their own?
- Can the space and equipment be arranged in a way that encourages the staff to perform routine tasks efficiently and cheerfully?
- Is all equipment flexible, durable, washable, and safe?
- Is all equipment to be used by the children scaled to the very small size of infants and toddlers?

Specific needs for equipment and supplies will depend on the number and ages of the children enrolled, how they are grouped, and the services offered by the program. The "Suggested Equipment and Supplies" list on the following pages is not all-inclusive, but contains suggestions for materials that are basic to providing quality care for infants and toddlers.

References and Suggested Reading:

Birckmayer, Jennifer. A Day in Day Care: A Program for Two-Year-Olds. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1981.

Cohen, Monroe D. (ed.) Selecting Educational Equipment and Materials for School and Home. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1976.

Huntington, Dorothy et al. Day Care 2: Serving Infants. Washington, D.C.: Office of Child Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, N.Y., 1980.

Willis, Anne and Ricciuti, Henry. A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1980.

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SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR AN INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM

(Specific needs will depend on the number of children, their ages/developmental levels, how groups and space are arranged, and services offered by the program. Equipment should be flexible, durable, washable, and safe. Equipment for the children should encourage them to safely explore, experiment, develop, and learn.)

INTEREST/ACTIVITY AREAS FOR YOUNG BABIES*

Dramatic Play--dolls, stuffed animals, toy telephones, etc.
Books--cloth books, picture books, soft rugs and/or cushions, adult size chair(s)
Music--record player and records or cassette player with tapes
Manipulatives--squeeze toys, balls, pounding boards, rattles, large beads; stacking toys and blocks for babies who are ready for them
Water Play--bathinette, plastic pans, sponges, unbreakable water toys
Infant mirrors (unbreakable)--hand-held and/or mounted on wall at floor level
Outdoor equipment--strollers, mats, blankets, infant seats
Low, open storage units for children's things
Closed storage units for adult supplies

INTEREST/ACTIVITY AREAS FOR OLDER BABIES, TODDLERS, AND TWO-YEAR-OLDS*

Dramatic Play--toddler-size play stove, refrigerator, sink, table, chairs, dolls, doll cribs, toy telephones, etc.
Blocks--unit blocks and block accessories (sets of people, animals, etc. to scale)
Library--books, low bookshelves or racks, soft chairs, rugs, cushions, adult chair(s)
Art--toddler-size table and chairs, easel, scissors (left and right-handed), paper, paint, large brushes, crayons, clay, play dough, collage materials, etc.
Music--record player, records, simple instruments, bells, shakers, etc.
Sand/Water Play--large pans or special table, unbreakable dishes and containers, waterproof aprons or smocks
Science--magnets, mirrors, stethoscope, non-poisonous plants
Manipulatives--puzzles, pounding benches, nesting and stacking toys, push/pull toys
Large Muscle--low climbing structures, toddler gym, wagons, tricycles, balls, etc.
Low, open storage units for children's things
Closed storage units for adult supplies

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* Toys for infants and toddlers should be in duplicates or better. Very young children do not "share" easily; duplicate toys can help avoid conflicts.

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(Suggested Equipment and Supplies for an Infant/Toddler Program, continued)

SLEEPING AREA

Cribs, bassinets, cots, or mats--one per child, appropriate to size and age
Bedding--mattresses, mattress pads, sheets, blankets
Crib toys--mobiles, rattles, teething rings, squeeze toys, etc.
Diaper changing table and liners
Covered wastebasket and liners
Diaper changing supplies--non-allergenic lotions, powders, tissues, etc.
Adult size rocking chair(s)
Storage cabinet(s) for supplies, linens, etc.
Cubbies, tote trays, or lockers for children's personal belongings
Clothes hamper
Radio, record player, or cassette player
Soap, water, paper towels, handwashing equipment should be easily accessible.

EATING/FEEDING AREA

Infant seats and/or feeding tables; toddler tables and chairs (table height 12"-14", chairs 6"-8" from floor)
Comfortable adult size chair(s) for holding, cuddling, feeding babies. (When meals are served at tables, adults should sit on small chairs with the children.)
Dishes and child-size eating utensils
Bibs and washcloths
Washable floor covering
Covered wastebasket and liners
Storage unit(s)
Counter-top refrigerator, if needed for infant bottles, juice, etc.
Soap, water, paper towels and handwashing equipment should be easily accessible.

FOOD PREPARATION AND STORAGE

Kitchen appliances, as needed--refrigerator, stove, dishwasher, sinks, etc.
Blender and/or food mill
Pots, pans, cooking utensils
Dish pans, sponges, bottle brushes, dishcloths, soaps, etc.
Paper towel dispenser and towels
Covered garbage pail and liners
Storage units and work counters

HOUSEKEEPING AND LAUNDRY

Washer and Dryer
Vacuum cleaner
Brooms, mops, dustrags, pails, brushes, etc.
Cleansers, soaps, disinfectants
Storage unit

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(Suggested Equipment and Supplies for an Infant/Toddler Program, continued)

BATHROOM

Dental hygiene supplies--individual toothbrushes; toothpaste (for two-year-olds and older)
Paper towel dispenser and towels
Paper cup dispenser and cups
Soap dispenser
Toilet tissue
Covered wastebasket and liners
Bathinette or large plastic tubs, as needed
Sturdy step stools, appropriate to age and size of children, if needed for comfortable use of toilets and sinks
Training ("Potty") chairs, if appropriate to age of children

OFFICE AND STAFF

Office equipment--desk(s) chairs, file cabinet(s), typewriter, etc.
Office supplies--paper, pencils, etc.
Telephone
Work table and chairs
Comfortable seating for staff, parents, visitors (a coffee pot is nice, too!)
Bookshelves, magazine racks
Bulletin Board
Training Materials--early childhood education books, periodicals, etc.

OTHER

First Aid and Health suppplies
Fire extinguishers
Fire alarm system and/or smoke detectors
Gates--as needed, for doorways, stair wells, etc.
Electric outlet covers
Curtains, window shades, and screens, as needed
Floor coverings, as needed
Extra diapers
Extra clothing
Posters, wallhangings, etc.
Approved child restraint car seats, if needed

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child care notebook

STAFFING AN INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Two major factors in providing quality child care for infants and toddlers are the quality of the staff and the way staff members relate to the children, parents, and each other. Let's look at some basic considerations for staffing an infant/toddler program.

STAFF POSITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS*

The actual size of the staff will depend upon the size of the program and its goals, but the following categories will be needed:

Director/Administrator can be one person who has full responsibility for managing the center and is also qualified to plan the educational program for the children, or a two-person team, one of whom handles administration while the other takes charge of program. The Director is the key to everything that happens in the center and is the liaison to parents and the community. It is essential that the Director or Director/Administrator team have a strong background in early childhood education, experience in programs for very young children, and good management skills.

Caregivers/Teachers spend their day interacting with the children, guiding activities and behaviors, observing and recording information that will help meet individual needs, and performing many routine tasks. In most centers, caregivers also regularly exchange information with parents.

Adults who work with infants and toddlers should be warm, creative, and flexible. They should be fond of very young children and enthusiastic about working with them. If possible, they should have some knowledge about and experience with infants and toddlers; they should also be open to learning. Good health, stamina, patience, and a sense of humor are essential!

Support Staff--cook, secretary, bookkeeper, maintenance worker, social worker--must have specific job-related skills. Because support staff members also interact with the children, it's important that they understand and enjoy them. The types of support staff positions needed for a given center will depend on the services offered. Some support positions can be part-time or can be combined with other jobs in the center.

Health Professionals should be available on a regular basis, to ensure that health standards, policies, and emergency procedures are maintained, and that caregivers receive training on health practices. In addition, at least one staff member who has certification in first aid treatment should be in the center at all times.

*It is important to check New York State Day Care Licensing Regulations for requirements and limitations concerning staff positions.

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ADULT TO CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZES

New York State Day Care Center Licensing Regulations require the following:

AGE OF CHILD	MINIMUM REQUIRED STAFF PER NUMBER OF CHILDREN	MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE
8 weeks to 18 months	1:4	8
18 months to 3 years	1:4	12
	or	
	1:5	10

Although the minimum required staff ratio is one caregiver to four children, many authorities feel that one caregiver to three children is more desirable. There are times when it's difficult for a caregiver to provide good care for four babies simultaneously. It's important to have extra help available during busy times and at times when a child needs extra attention. It's also important to structure groups so that there are at least two caregivers with each group of children. In this way, the adults will feel less isolated and can be supportive to each other.

STAFFING PATTERNS

A variety of staffing patterns are possible in an infant/toddler program. The following systems are probably the most commonly used:

"Primary Caregiver" System: Each caregiver takes primary responsibility for three to five specific children. The system is flexible enough that all caregivers are aware of the total group and share responsibilities when needed.

"Team" System: All caregivers are responsible for all the children in the group; caregivers share routine tasks and program activities. In many "teams," one caregiver acts as "Team Leader" or "Head Teacher" and takes major responsibility for day-to-day planning and staff supervision.

"Zone" System: Caregivers take responsibility for different interest/activity areas rather than specific children. Caregivers rotate among the areas at regular intervals.

Other systems, variations, and combinations are possible. Consistency and continuity of caregivers are key elements in structuring a staffing pattern that best meets the individual needs of infants and toddlers.

References and Suggested Reading:

Huntington, Dorothy et al (eds.). Day Care 2: Serving Infants. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971.

Neugebauer, Roger and Lurie, Robert (eds.). Caring for Infants and Toddlers: What Works, What Doesn't. Redmond, Washington: Child Care Information Exchange, 1980 and 1982.

New York State Department of Social Services. Day Care Center Licensing Regulations. Albany, NY., 1980.

Willis, Anne and Ricciuti, Henry. A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1980.

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THE DAILY PROGRAM FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

"But what do the babies DO all day?" is a question sometimes asked by people who are not familiar with infant/toddler care. An experienced caregiver might answer, "Why, they do the same things they would do at home--eat, sleep, play..." A simple answer, but basically true.

A good program for infants and toddlers provides the same basic elements that good parents do:

- a safe, friendly environment;
- knowledgeable, loving adults;
- activities and routines that are appropriate for the child.

During the day in an infant/toddler center, a number of routines and activities take place. Taken as a whole, they make up the "curriculum" for infants and toddlers. Playtime, naptime, etc. may not happen at the same time for each child; throughout the day, individualized caregiving gives each child ample opportunities to build trust, make choices, and enjoy the wonderful process of learning at his or her own pace.

Before the children arrive

Caregivers get ready for the children. They set up diapering and feeding equipment, check linens, put out playthings, and check for any special plans or events.

Arrival time

Caregivers greet parents and children warmly. Parents let caregivers know when their children ate last, how they slept, what mood they're in, and any changes in patterns or routines. Some parents ask caregivers for advice, others may have a question or complaint that needs to be taken care of. Caregivers jot down notes about parent comments.

When they arrive, some babies will be asleep, some awake, some hungry, some ready for play. Some children may be going through a period of unhappiness when their parents leave, and will require patience and understanding from both parents and caregivers.

Most children will need to be toileted or changed. Caregivers put sleeping children down for naps, offer playthings to babies who are awake and ready to play, and get ready to feed hungry children.

Feeding and eating

Mealtime is an important social and learning time. Caregivers hold babies for all bottle feedings, but older children can sit at feeding tables for meals and snacks. Most older babies enjoy feeding themselves finger foods and learning to use a spoon (activities that can get pretty messy). Caregivers sit with the children at mealtimes, both to offer help when needed and to be sociable. Caregivers chat with the children; they encourage the children to try new foods, but never force them to eat. After the meal, clean-up of hands, faces, tables, utensils, and floors is an important part of every mealtime.

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Naps and quiet times

For naps, each child has his/her individual crib and linens. Tiny babies usually sleep several times during the day. As they grow older, children stay awake for longer periods, changing to two naps a day and eventually to one nap, usually after lunch. Some children like to be rocked and cuddled before naps, while others prefer to be put directly to bed. Caregivers and parents often consult with each other about each child's personal style.

In addition to regular naps, children need to have times during the day when they can be alone to play quietly, rest, or simply daydream. Sensitive caregivers take care that these needs are met safely and comfortably.

Diapering and toileting

Diapering can be a special one-to-one time for caregiver and child. Babies need to have their diapers changed many times during the day; the caregiver can take this time to talk to the baby or share a special song or game. Caregivers must also follow careful sanitation procedures during diapering.

When a child is old enough for toilet training, caregivers work closely with parents to ensure that the same methods are used at the center and at home.

Play and learning

"Playtime" is not a separate activity in an infant/toddler program. Play and learning go on throughout the day--during mealtime, rest time, diapering, and other times when the child is free to explore, experiment, and interact with objects, adults, and other children.

A quality program for infants and toddlers offers a variety of playthings, equipment, and activities--formal and informal, indoors and outdoors--that foster each child's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Record-keeping

The center director usually keeps administrative records like licenses, employment records, financial records, and long-range program planning. Caregivers keep daily records that they share with parents, including information on what and when each child ate, when and how long he/she slept, bowel movements, and "landmarks" like a new tooth or a first step.

Departure time

As parents come to take their children home, caregivers tell them about their child's day, always sharing positive information but being selective and tactful about bringing up any problems. Some parents will stay and chat for a few minutes, others will hurry away, a few may be late. Some children will be cheerful, others may be tired and grumpy; caregivers and parents may be tired, too.

After the children leave, caregivers do last-minute clean-up, record-keeping, and safety checks of room and equipment before they, too, leave for the day.

References and Suggested Reading:

Gerber, Magda. "What Is Appropriate Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers?" in Infants: Their Social Environments, Bernice Weissbourd and Judith Music, Editors. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1981.

Willis, Anne and Ricciuti, Henry. A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1980.

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PROTECTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF INFANTS AND TODDLERS

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

Protecting the health and safety of children is a major responsibility for all child care programs, but it's especially critical in programs for infants and toddlers. The very nature of little children exposes them to risks: their natural curiosity can lead them into precarious situations, they put everything into their mouths, hug and kiss people with colds as readily as those without, and are generally unconcerned about what's clean and what's not, or what's safe and what's not. It's up to adults to set standards that protect them while they grow and learn.

Care Providers and parents should be aware that every child needs these things for healthy growth and development:

- a safe, interesting environment
- a balanced, nutritious diet
- sufficient fluids
- adequate rest
- exercise
- plenty of fresh air
- loving care that meets the child's individual needs and interests

The day care program should work with parents and health professionals to develop clearly written policies on health and safety. At a minimum, these should include:

- Admission procedures
- Staff training on health and safety concerns and practices
- Regular contacts/consultations with health professionals
- Accurate health records, including physicals, immunizations, and special needs
- Guidelines on medications
- Emergency procedures
- Nutrition guidelines
- Dental hygiene
- Procedures for exchanging information with parents
- Guidelines on when to exclude sick children or sick staff members from the center
- Guidelines on what to do if a child becomes ill at the center

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Health policies should include specific sanitary routines, such as:

- Procedures for handwashing, bathing, diaper changing, feeding
- Procedures for sterilizing bottles, nipples, eating utensils
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of diaper changing areas
- Regular cleaning and disinfecting of toys, floors, furniture, equipment
- Regular changing of each child's crib linens
- Careful handling of soiled or contaminated articles, diapers, clothing
- Use of disposable tissues, washcloths, diapers, etc.

Program policies should also include specific safety rules, such as:

- Regular practice of emergency procedures
- All toys and equipment checked regularly for stability and safety
- Staff watchful about what children are reaching for (including other children!)
- All rugs securely attached to floor; footwear sturdy and non-skid
- All radiators, heaters, doors, windows, stairwells protected; all electric outlets covered
- Crib mattresses low enough to keep babies from falling or climbing out of cribs
- All medicines and cleaning supplies in locked cabinets
- End-of-day safety check of appliances, doors, windows, etc.

Routines and procedures for health and safety should include instructions on when they are to be done and who is responsible

Parents should be fully informed about all policies.

References and Suggested Reading:

Aronson, Susan S. "The Health Component of the Child Care Program." Caring for Infants and Toddlers: What Works, What Doesn't. Redmond, WA: Child Care Information Exchange, 1980.

Aronson, Susan S. "Infection and Day Care." Child Care Information Exchange, March/April, 1983.

Highburger, Ruth and Boynton, Mary. "Preventing Illness in Infant/Toddler Day Care." Young Children, March, 1983.

Willis, Anne and Ricciuti, Henry. A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1980.

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RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN PARENTS AND THE INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM STAFF

by Polly Spedding
Extension Associate

A Good working relationship with parents is essential to meeting the goals of quality child care. The program should be supportive of parents, exchange information with them, and give them the opportunity to influence the kind of care their child is receiving.

BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM TO PARENTS:*

- The child's health, safety, and general welfare will be the first consideration of the caregiver.
- The caregiver's concern also extends to meeting the child's social and emotional needs and providing interesting learning experiences.
- Caregiving practices will be consistent and reliable; that is, they will not change drastically from day to day. Major changes will be discussed and agreed upon by parents and caregivers.
- The caregiver will try to find out as much as possible about the child and how he or she is used to being taken care of at home. In so far as possible, the caregiver will try to care for the child in ways similar to those used at home.
- The caregiver will remember that the parents have major responsibility for the child and should be the decision-makers.

There are also times when additional considerations are called for:

BEFORE ENROLLMENT:

- Parents should visit the center, observe the program, and have the chance to comment and ask questions.
- The day care program should clearly explain to parents all policies regarding health, illness, arrival and departure times, daily program, fees, special services, etc.
- Parents should provide information on the child's health, feeding and sleeping patterns, likes and dislikes. Parents should also provide basic information about their work schedules, where they can be reached, and emergency procedures.
- Information provided by parents should be kept private and confidential.

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DURING THE FIRST FEW WEEKS IN THE CENTER:

- The day care staff should be sensitive to the fact that placing their child in day care may be a difficult experience for some parents--especially new parents or those that are new to day care.
- To relieve anxieties, parents can be encouraged to spend more time at the center for the first few weeks. This enables the child, parents, and staff to learn more about one another. These visits can be expected to gradually decrease as the child eases into the program.
- Parents should be reassured that they will be called if their child becomes ill or experiences prolonged distress.

DAY-TO-DAY CONTACTS:

- Parents should be welcome at the day care center at all times. A parent area and/or bulletin board is helpful.
- Caregivers and parents should exchange information about the child's eating, sleeping, play, mood, and general health. This can be done formally through written information sheets, informally through conversations at arrival and departure times, or both.
- Caregivers should always relate positive information, new accomplishments, and landmarks, but should be selective and tactful about bringing up problems.
- Caregivers should omit comments that might appear to question the competency, culture, or values of parents.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES:

- Parents should be represented on policy and advisory boards related to the day care program.
- Informal parent conferences should be scheduled at regular intervals.
- Parent meetings, picnics, dinners, etc. can provide the opportunity for parents to gain information and to build support networks with other parents as well as with caregivers.
- Home visits can be a useful means of exchanging information, but should only be scheduled if mutually agreed upon and not evaluative.
- Referral to other community resources/services should be offered as needed, to assist parents in their roles as advocates for themselves and their children.
- Whenever a child leaves the infant/toddler program, caregivers should work carefully with parents to ensure a smooth transition.

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*Adapted from materials developed by Anne Willis and Henry Ricciuti at the Cornell Infant Resource Center. For a more detailed discussion, see Chapter 2 in A Good Beginning for Babies: Guidelines for Group Care by Willis & Ricciuti. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1980.

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CHILD CARE NOTEBOOK
REACTION FORM
PCS Rev. 6/83

child care notebook

Your reactions/comments/suggestions regarding the Child Care Notebook would be most helpful in planning future additions and/or revisions. Please take a few minutes to complete the following:

1. What was your main interest in using the notebook?

   _____ general interest in child care

   _____ planning to start a child care program

   _____ assisting others in chld care programming

   _____ other (please specify)

2. What part or parts of the notebook did you use?

   Section(s) _____ Pages _____

3. Please indicate your overall reaction by circling a number on this line:

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

   Not useful Very useful

4. What did you find most useful?

5. What did you find least useful?

6. Please add other comments or suggestions: (You may use the back of the page.)

7. Date _____ County _____

8. OPTIONAL: Your name _____
   Title/Agency _____
   Address _____

* *

PLEASE RETURN TO: Polly Spedding, Extension Associate
Department of Human Development & Family Studies, MVR Hall
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